THEMES IN MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN HISTORY

DYNASTY IN MOTION: WEDDING JOURNEYS IN LATE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Patrik Pastrnak

ROUTLEDGE

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Bringing together a variety of evidence, such as princely correspondence, travelogues, financial accounts, chronicles, chivalric or Renaissance poems, this book examines marital travels of princely brides and grooms on a comparative trans-European scale.

This book argues that these journeys were extraordinary events and were instrumental for dynastical and monarchical self-representation, and channelled aspirations and anxieties of princely houses when facing each other. Each such journey was a little earthquake that resonated across all layers of society. Hundreds of diplomats, envoys, aristocrats, city officials, low-status personnel, soldiers, artists, musicians, poets, and humanists were involved in preparing, executing, and commemorating them. Stretching far beyond the mere physical movements of the future royal spouse, the journeys snowballed into a myriad of other meanings that epitomised the very character of a society based on prestige, magnificence, honour, and glory. The story of nuptial travelling is fascinating and rich; it is a perfect condensation of monarchical order, dynastic agenda, value system, personal motives, female agency, and social networks in this period. It is dynasty in motion, prestige on wheels, queenly time, place, and time like no other.

This volume is the perfect resource for upper-level students and scholars of court studies, the history of monarchy, and for those interested in premodern Europe.

Patrik Pastrnak is a postdoctoral researcher at Palacky University, Olomouc. In January 2022, he completed his DPhil in History at the New College, Oxford, where he was the recipient of the Robert Oresko Memorial Scholarship.

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To Zuzi and all princesses and princes

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ABBREVIATIONS

AG	Archivio Gonzaga
AGAD	Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie [The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw]
ASE	Archivio segreto estense
ASFi	Archivio di stato di Firenze
ASMi	Archivio di stato di Milano
ASMn	Archivio di stato di Mantova
ASMo	Archivio di stato di Modena
AT	Acta Tomiciana
BJ	Biblioteka Jagiellońska [The Jagiellonian Library in Cracow]
BL	British Library
BSB	Bayerische Staatsbibliothek
CVS	Carteggio Visconteo-Sforzesco
FA	Familienakten
FHKA	Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv
FUK	Familienurkunden
HHStA	Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv
HS	Handschrift
ÖNB	Österreichische Nationalbibliothek
MdP	Mediceo del Principato
MS	manuscript
TLA	Tiroler Landesarchiv
UB	Universitätsbibliothek

NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY, TITLES, PERSONAL NAMES, AND GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATIONS

I use the phrases bridal, nuptial, wedding, spousal journey, transfer, or passage interchangeably. I do not try to eschew the term *bridal* when speaking about wedding travel as a whole, that is, referring to the male transfers as well, as this adjective is synonymous with *nuptial* in certain collocations (e.g. bridal couple and bridal suite).

The brides and grooms surveyed in this thesis held a whole range of born or wedded titles (emperor—empress, king—queen, archduke—archduchess, duke—duchess, infant—infanta, and so forth). Since my objective here is to write about nuptial travel in general, I mostly use the term princess/prince in a general sense—that means, it does not refer only to the son or daughter of the king or the anglicised form of one of the titles with the hierarchy of the Holy Roman Empire *(Fürst/Fürstin)*, but denotes the princely bride or princely groom, i.e. a member of the ruling dynasty in the nuptial process, be it an heir apparent to the throne or ruling duke. Only when speaking about concrete persons, I use their special title (e.g. archduchess or infanta).

The current court and royal studies tend to avoid anglicising the names of royal figures. This book focuses on the figures who did not touch only one or two national historiographies but many. This necessarily causes the trouble of name variants, since one prince(ss) is called differently in every language, for example, Joanna of Habsburg, duchess of Florence is *Johanna von Österreich* in German and *Giovanna d'Asburgo* in Italian. Coming from a Central European background, where such a name mess is quite common, I decided to anglicise the names of the princely figures, rather than sticking to the Italian, German, or Spanish version. However, since some variants of names are already so deep-rooted (for example, Marie Antoinette, but also Maria of Austria and others), attempts for consistency were doomed to fail from the very beginning.

Therefore, I beg the reader for forgiveness if she finds the name of her queen linguistically mutilated. Also, the modern and English—if existing—names of cities, towns, and other geographical locations are used. This choice might lead to anachronism; however, I believe it will facilitate the orientation in the text. All translations are mine.

For better orientation, each prince(ss) is given her/his journey date in square brackets. Also, to avoid confusion between the two Maximilians in the sample, I use their later ordinals as Holy Roman Emperors, although this is highly anachronistic in the time of their respective journeys when they were not emperors nor kings of Romans, only archdukes of Austria. For this and other confusing traits of the book I again plead the forgiveness of the kind reader.

1

INTRODUCTION

As Beatrice of Aragon (1457–1508), the future queen of Hungary and Bohemia, was about to set off to her husband and new realm (in 1476), Diomede Carafa, the senior Neapolitan courtier, handed her an opuscule containing this piece of advice:

> You must strive not to make a low profit in prestige even though You will suffer the distress of the journey, for the occasion of this sort presents itself rarely.[1]

Carafa's text is full of similar suggestions on how to take advantage of the nuptial journey.

This type of travel—far from having something in common with tourism or leisure activities—was a direct consequence of political and dynastic manoeuvring, typical of medieval and early modern Europe. If a ruler, on account of various motivations (searching for foreign allies, boosting of social-standing, not wanting to be relative to one's own liegemen, etc.), chose to wed a daughter from another princely house, the new queen had to necessarily come from abroad. Such a transfer was a prerogative of the ruling class, since aristocracy usually did not participate in long-distance marital unions, if it did, such weddings were concluded within the royal court that consisted of foreign ladies-in-waiting, brought by a foreign queen.[2]

Generally, the prospects for a marital union were first discussed with a third–party court that functioned as the first, indirect point of contact with the potential wedding parties.[3] If both houses were prompt to conclude the alliance, they started direct negotiations, at first selecting a suitable candidate for marriage from amongst the royal daughters, taking into account her physical

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and mental qualities. Then, envoys and painters were sent to another court to investigate the princess's manners or capture her physical look in a portrait. After or during that, the marital contracts, specifying dowry, dower, and other dotal assignments were debated. When everything was settled, the husband usually sent a magnificent embassy to fetch the wife and perform nuptials by proxy at her court. Only then the new queen (or duchess, etc.) could begin her bridal journey, in the company of her husband's delegation and an even more sumptuous retinue of her fellow-country(wo)men, culminating with the first meeting with the spouse, coronation, and nuptial festivities. The journey was thus a necessary—but not particularly interesting—step in this process.

This is the story reiterated by scholarship as well as popular literature. But if nothing else, through Carafa's counsel, quoted at the very beginning, cracks start to appear. Could there be more to this journey? Why would the Neapolitan dignitary assert that this was an opportunity of a rare kind and that had to be taken advantage of? This book argues that wedding travel was not an inconsequential by-product of the international princely marriage. On the contrary, it played a crucial role in medieval and early modern dynasties and their members. By looking into cultural (social, instructional, literary, and gender) factors it will be shown that these journeys were ideal tools to negotiate the social status of princely houses, propagate splendour and magnificence, create dynastic memory, enable integration of foreign brides, or prepare princely individuals for their new role.

Historical background

When did the first bridal journey take place? Or, since when have people travelled to get married? Was it a unique feature of the European Middle Ages? It is difficult to answer these questions but archaeological findings suggest that marital migrations might be older than we think and they might well go back to the Bronze Age. The remains of a young female, ca 3,400 years old, found in Denmark and known as the Egtved Girl, reveal that she originated outside the burial territory and travelled intensively in her last years over long distances; her garments were made of material of foreign origin too.[4] Researchers suggest that she might have come from southwestern Germany,[5] Norway or south-eastern Sweden.[6] Did she come to present-day Denmark as a result of intermarriage between tribal elites?[7] The marriage scenario, however, is not the only possible explanation here. As Sophie Bergerbrant argues there could have been plenty of reasons for her intensive mobility: she could have been an itinerant priestess and travelled to perform special rituals, she could have been visiting her relatives, she could have learnt or taught some special skill, etc.[8] If the Egtved Girl really travelled to get married "abroad", there is one particular indicator: she was buried with clothes from her homeland, meaning she must have carried some objects when transferring to the new environment. Was it a precursor of the later bridal

trousseaus? We do not know yet, as we do not know anything specific about the journey itself, whether it was accompanied by some special rituals or customs. Further research is yet to explain this and other cases of mobility in the Bronze Age but it may well document the exchange of brides between prehistoric elites. After all, long before it we possess literary evidence of inter-dynastic marriages amongst the rulers of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, or Mycenaean Greece. The ancient empires kept open channels of communication and strengthened their political alliances through the exchange of gifts and artisans or intermarriage between their elites. For instance, King Kadashman-Enlil of Babylonia and Amenophis III of Egypt joined their children in a marital alliance in the mid-fourteenth century BCE, while Ramesses II of Egypt married the daughter of Hittite king in the thirteenth century BCE.[9]

Again, we do not know much about the transfers of Egyptian or Mesopotamian princesses, but we are relatively well informed about the wedding transfers of ancient Roman brides, aristocratic and plebeian alike. This *domum deductio*, leading the bride to the groom's house, was deemed the most constitutive aspect of the Roman wedding: it was the procession, not the consummation of marriage or the marital contract that made the wedding.[10] Even the very phrase for getting married in Latin—*ducere uxorem*—meant "leading the wife".[11] According to Karen Hersch, who tries to reconstruct all stages of the Roman wedding, the first phase took place in the bride's natal house when she got dressed and the dotal tablets were signed. Subsequently, she walked to the groom's house in the company of children and other attendants carrying a basket and a torch, perhaps accompanied by obscene songs *(Fescennine verses)* and the throwing of nuts too. After reaching the groom's threshold, she smeared the doorpost with wolf and pork fat and festooned it with a piece of wool. Inside the house, the bride proclaimed her willingness for marriage by the phrase *Ubi tu Gaius, ego Gaia* and the groom offered her fire and water. The bride handed over golden coins to the husband, and his house gods *(Lares)*. The wedding feast followed, and after that, the bride was led to the bedroom. This elaborated set of rituals connected the nuptials with Roman history and traditions, but more importantly, it was meant to guarantee the legitimacy of the wedding by presenting the bride to the wider public and attributing to her the traditional female virtues. Her garments symbolised virginity, fertility, chastity, fidelity, and industry, the child companions were a sign of innocence and marital fidelity, the basket with distaff and spindle alluded to the female tasks in the household, while the torch and anointment of the door could have had an apotropaic function.[12]

It is hard to tell whether such a complex set of rituals accompanied passages of women from other ancient civilisations. As a wider cultural phenomenon, however, dynastic intermarriages were a common practice throughout the entirety of Antiquity and they naturally continued in the Middle Ages as well, although there were periods when rulers both in (the European) West

and East favoured marrying local noblewomen rather than foreign princesses. The Carolingian and Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in the ninth and tenth centuries and in the Byzantine Empire up to the thirteenth century are the most visible examples.[13] Choosing a bride from one's own nobility could be a way to gain support and establish ties within one's own domain, or, in the Byzantine case, to manifest one's own self-sufficiency and autonomy that did not need to rely on multiple marriage alliances with foreign powers.[14] On the other hand, the marital bond with one's own subjects sometimes caused more problems than it helped to solve. For instance, the king could be involved in the petty wars of his aristocratic relatives or the king-related nobles could lay claim to the throne and thus cause further unrest.[15]

Nevertheless, from the year 1000 on, the European medieval dynasties exchanged brides in great measure, and one can even state that the mutual exchange of princesses defines the cultural and political boundaries of medieval Europe.[16] International conjugal alliances were a means by which to connect to another dynasty, to seal and manifest peace and friendship, and it could bring useful artistic, scientific, or business connections, but similarly, as with marriages to the local nobility, they could be a source of potential discord for every party involved. For kings, it could be much more difficult to annul matrimony with a woman backed by their powerful royal relatives. On the other hand, the princesses married abroad could feel estranged from their new environment, at best, feeling homesick (if it is even possible to apply a modern-day category for such emotion), and at worst, provoking explicit hatred on account of the novel modes of dressing or table manners that these elite women often brought with themselves.[17] Naturally, the pitfalls of these interdynastic unions, which were based on power interests rather than seeking marital harmony, led several critics to voice their concerns. The Venetian humanist Francesco Barbaro in his treatise *De re uxoria* promotes the moral qualities of the future wife rather than her dynastic potential.[18] Similarly, Erasmus of Rotterdam in his educational treatise for Charles V advocates that a queen be chosen based on her moral profile rather than her status. Then, she should be chosen from among local noblewomen or, at most, from the princesses from neighbouring countries, rebuking thus the cruelty of royal fathers who do not hesitate

> to send [their daughters] away, sometimes, to remote regions, to men entirely different in language, appearance, character, and thought, as if they were being sent into exile, when they would be happier to live in their own land, even with somewhat less pomp.[19]

Judging from these words, it might seem that Erasmus criticises royal intermarriages because of their inhumanity, and he partially does, but his main point is the interest of the state. Drawing examples from history he finds that these unions do not contribute to building peace but they sow even more discord and

wars.[20] Naturally, one cannot miss the obvious irony that the objections to the international marriage alliances were addressed to Charles V, whose dominions and power stemmed exactly from such unions and who more than anybody else epitomised the use of such wedding diplomacy.

This and any other sort of criticism did not stop the practice of interdynastic unions, which, by extension, meant that princely figures traversed the continent in search of their new spouse since the dawn of the Middle Ages. The first description of a medieval bridal journey comes from Gregory of Tours, although it is a wedding transfer like no other. In 584, the Frankish Princess Rigunth, daughter of King Chilperic, was about to be married to the king of the Visigoths and to travel with all honours from Paris to Toulouse to meet her spouse. Yet her journey faced difficulties from the very beginning: the servants joined her entourage only under threats of force and imprisonment, and some of them allegedly rather hanged themselves than be separated from their families. Others drew up their last wills asking their relatives to open them, and thus consider them dead, as soon as the princess crossed the border of Hispania. Rigunth was supplied with such an amount of gold, silver, and gems that it took fifty carriages to transport them but only at great expense to the royal treasury and thanks to the tricks of Riguth's mother. Leaving Paris, one of the princess's wagon axles broke, which was seen as a bad omen. What is more, during the journey many companions escaped from the entourage stealing horses and parts of the trousseau. As the king refused to cover the travel expenses from the royal treasury, the bridal company went plundering poor people on the way, seizing livestock and crops.[21] Meanwhile, King Chilperic, Riguth's father, died and a rival duke did not miss the chance to rob the princess of her treasure and put her into custody where he held her in austere conditions for two years until she was finally released and sent back to her mother Fredegund.[22]

For Gregory, Rigunth's journey was a story of calamities: by using Biblical examples he does not hesitate to compare the brutal treatment of the entourage to the Massacre of the Innocents or to interpret the pillaging on the way as the fulfilment of Joel's prophecy about a plague of insects. It is a story about the misery that the royal pair of Chilperic and Fredegund brought upon their daughter and her companions by being more concerned about their own wealth and prestige than their daughter's welfare, and more so, it fits well into Gregory's negative portrayal of Fredegund.[23] But besides his portrayal of misfortunes, he also records the basic elements of the bridal journeys as they would be carried out even hundreds of years after: prior to the princess's departure, a delegation from her spouse reached her court, most probably to fetch her. Her entourage is made up of servants, noble personages, and a military escort; their total count allegedly amounted to four thousand people. The bride bade farewell to her parents in tears and kisses and before the first encounter with the groom she and her retinue adorned themselves to display her splendour, and thus her status as well.

The fragments of these elements from time to time appear in many medieval sources. For instance, Jean of Joinville in his *Life of Saint Louis* mentions very briefly that he accompanied "the king's sister to Hagenau to the German king".[24] Apart from the mere information that some bridal journeys obviously occurred, this short sentence shows far more important detail: it testifies that the bridal journeys were events involving such prominent and senior members of the court as Joinville, who was the king's counsellor and confidant. As this work reveals, this was a standard practice and the nuptial voyage encompassed many reputable figures of the day, who all were to manifest the high status of the prince(ss) and political unity of her/his homeland vis-à-vis a foreign ruling house.

This was just one solitary mention of spousal travel in one chronicle: there must have been hundreds of journeys. Given the omnipresence of interdynastic unions in medieval and early modern times,[25] Europe must have been criss-crossed by princely brides and grooms—daughters and sons of kings, dukes, imperial electors, margraves, etc.—making their way to their future spouses. Yet, the subject has not received adequate attention.

State of research

Naturally, due to its omnipresence in the lives of kings and queens as major political figures, the theme of the bridal journey has not been absent from scholarship. However, in most cases has been treated as a necessary addendum to the princely marriages, particularly within queenly biographies. Obviously, there have been many fantastic case studies, looking into particular journeys separately, and would be futile to mention all of them here as they are quoted throughout this book. Similarly, there have been many works concentrating solely on one particular princely nuptials, which all devote a chapter or more to the journeys.[26] Retha Warnicke's excellent book on the marriage of Anne of Cleves definitely stands out from this group as it draws many comparisons with other princely unions in an attempt to view the wedding in the context.[27] From the collective volume investigating the Palatine wedding, it is worth mentioning an interesting attempt by Molly Taylor-Poleskey to unravel the trajectory of the nuptial transfer in respect to political and confessional boundaries via digital mapping tools.[28]

Handling the journeys separately enables an in-depth and comprehensive analysis of one case but might also hide several pitfalls, such as isolating the phenomena and missing the wider context. This is evident even in the latest collective volume *Prinzessinen unterwegs* (Princesses on the way). Despite many significant inputs into the study of female travel in early modern Europe, the volume does not attempt to provide a comprehensive evaluation of wedding journeys. Moreover, it characterises them rather traditionally as a necessary result of dynastic politics serving primarily as a means of political communication (e.g. claiming superiority over another dynasty through clothing, or

demonstrating power in remote regions).[29] The only study devoted exclusively to bridal journeys offers a fascinating picture of the transfers of Empress Maria Theresa of Habsburg's two daughters [1768/1769], putting them into a political and dynastic context.[30] Still, it is largely a disjointed picture as it treats the two journeys separately and a much-needed parallel overview of the major issues featured in both transfers is given only briefly in the final words. It does touch upon topics such as differences in status or the educational tasks undertaken during the journey, but it could have been given more attention. For instance, the authors mention the existence of the instructions drafted by Maria Theresa for her daughters but state only that "it was written for the princesses to prepare themselves for their future role," which, if more elaborated upon, would make an interesting comparative model for the conduct book by Diomede Carafa, quoted in the beginning at this volume.[31]

Studying individual cases can thus have severe limits. On the other hand, comparison of similar cases at once might help to eschew simplistic views and be more effective in revealing deeper patterns or disproving deeply routed stereotypes. One of the finest examples of such a cross-comparative approach to studying princely weddings and queenship studies, in general, is Katarzyna Kosior's *Becoming Queen: East and West*.[32] Looking at sixteenth-century France, England, and Poland, Kosior analyses the whole set of issues tied to queenly initiation, such as coronation, pregnancy, or motherhood. In the first chapter, she addresses marital transfers as well. While producing fresh and lively ideas on the emotions, protocol, or dynastic identities visualised in the material culture, her study could not be an exhaustive examination of the entire dynamics of the journeys as it focuses on the wider process of queen-making. However, it constitutes another major step in their systematic evaluation.

The beginnings of this trend can be traced to the 1990s. The first attempt to try to slowly shift from the political and one-case-only perspective is a study by Karl-Heinz Spieß (1997).[33] Besides giving a general background to the weddings that involved long-distance travel, Spieß briefly points out several functions of the bridal journey: a representative one (a), which served to manifest the prestige of the uniting families. Then, a diplomatic one (b): the bridal journey, Spieß states, was a substitute for non-existing royal assemblies, hence why the bride was accompanied by high-ranking members of nobility. This diplomatic layer was at the same time strongly connected with a meticulously planned *Staatsschauspiel* (state spectacle), the festive function (c).[34] Spieß also briefly mentions various other issues such as legal background, or the practicalities of the journey, such as the first meetings of the newlyweds, the bridal entourage, language differences, etc.

A definite breakthrough comes with Christiane Coester's study (2008/2010) which clearly understands bridal-journey problematics within their cultural dimension.[35] According to her, a bridal journey is a social act that possesses a hidden symbolic value, lying in the dynastic representation of power and

wealth that was crucial for the bridal journey.[36] She divides the bridal journeys into three types—a classic one (a), during which the bride travels to the court of her future groom; (b) a type during which a groom travels and stays at the court of his bride, and (c) the scenario when the groom travels to pick up and accompany the bride to his court, which, according to Coester, occurs in the case when the woman outranks the man in terms of noble hierarchy.[37] Coester then concentrates on the crossing of borders during the nuptial journey—that is, what it meant for a young bride to transfer to a foreign environment, and to cross not only geographical but ritual boundaries as well—the passing of authority from the parents to the husband.[38] She notices and comments on the physical visualisation of such a passage that was often manifested by the changing of the bride's dress or hairstyle.[39] Coester's study is thus a key pioneering point of reference for further research and sheds significant light on the previously uncharted territory of the cultural side of bridal travelling in terms of ritual passage and its visualisations or behavioural rules. Nonetheless, given the limited scope of an article and a book chapter respectively, Coester and Spieß could not provide a deeper analysis of the proposed subjects, nor focus on other aspects of the nuptial journeys, such as gender or literary dimensions. Still, they serve as a point of reference throughout this book as their concepts will be tested on a wider sample of cases.

As a part of the major dynastic feasts and encompassing many features of dynastic world, the journeys naturally must be examined together with late medieval and early modern princely weddings. These have been examined in several branches of scholarship, such as festival and ritual studies, court, queenship, or diplomatic studies. Scholarship on court or princely festivities, despite going back to the very beginning of cultural history (Burckhardt, Huizinga), has evolved radically. An earlier approach, regarding festivities solely in their performative role, has shifted to an analysis of the constructive function of ceremonies. Public festivities are no longer seen as the mere representation of social consensus; rather, their active role for society is accentuated (in constructing power, social structure, or memory).[40] Simultaneously, a debate about the messages of public festivities has been taking place. Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly tried to discern two types of celebrations ("ceremonies" and "spectacles", the former having a constructive role for power structures and the latter serving the purpose of entertainment only), and like many others, she stresses the message of power on the performative or constructional level of festivities.[41] Most recently, the hermeneutical set for the analysis of ceremonies has been broadened (by J. R. Mulryne and others) and they have started to be scrutinised also from the viewpoint of their educative function, or from the perspective that they could serve as a *lieu de mémoire* or a dialogue (between a ruler and a city, for instance).[42]

Early modern festivals are elaborated also by the closely related field of court and palace studies. Starting with *Die Höfische Gesellschaft* (The court society), the pioneering work of Norbert Elias (first published in 1969 but written much

earlier),[43] court studies has grown into a vibrant field that examines the princely surrounding in physical, economic, social, cultural, and artistic terms, bringing together examples from all around medieval and early modern Europe.[44] Various festive occasions at court are a constant theme[45]; however, attention has also been paid to residences[46] and their role in constructing gender identity,[47] cultural patronage,[48] or global comparisons.[49] Furthermore, the issues of homosocial and homosexual relationships, race, diplomacy, privacy, or bodies at court have been examined.[50]

Closely connected to festival studies are studies of ritual. "The widest possible disagreement" about the exact definition of the term *ritual*,[51] has led some scholars to try to cut the Gordian knot of differences between rituals and ceremonies. However, a functionalist view, today prevailing, claiming that the boundary between ritual and ceremony does not (or hardly) exist, opens an intriguing possibility for evaluating ritual acts with the tools of festival studies, and vice versa. For instance, Dušan Zupka examines the role in political communication of the *adventus regis*, and while stressing the term ritual, it is essentially a festival study.[52] The points raised by Philippe Buc about the discrepancy between *ritual-in-text* and *ritual-in-performance* (i.e. how rituals are portrayed in the texts and how they were performed in reality), and the possible remedy proposed by Dalewski and Althoff—that texts always reflected reality to some extent, being embedded in tradition or being written to meet certain audience's expectations—could help to overcome problems with interpreting the accuracy of festival books also.[53] Ultimately, since the bridal journey fulfilled the role of ritual transition taking place in every nuptial, it must be examined from a ritualistic (or more precisely, anthropological) point of view as well. For the analysis of spousal travel, it means that the particular points of transfer must be viewed from the perspective of separation and incorporation of the bride, which are essential steps for every rite of passage in van Gennep's sense.[54]

Writing about the cultural aspects of (not only bridal) travel alludes to cultural transfer studies. Regarding queens and elite women, this branch of scholarship has brought significant insight into different levels of cultural interaction, for instance, it has helped to distinguish various degrees of a queen's influence/agency, being either an agent, instrument, or catalyst of cultural exchange.[55] Current research scrutinises how queens facilitated cultural exchange (in art, literature, indirectly in commerce as well), but also how cultural transfer influenced confessional and dynastic politics, overcame gender limitations, or posed personal or religious frictions.[56] Nonetheless, since cultural transfer was a long-term procedure, despite starting with the wedding and the bridal journey (by means of trousseaus and gift-giving),[57] it is only partially discernible during the bridal journey itself and cultural transfer studies concentrate mostly on the post-nuptial life of queens.

The second major branch of scholarship that has dealt with princely weddings, and thus indirectly with bridal journeys, is queenship and gender studies.

These studies have undergone significant changes as well: from the traditional approach of the nineteenth century, viewing women through their role in the domestic sphere, to the radical changes brought by the feminist movements, when attention was brought to the issues of gender, power, and status.[58] The currently flourishing field of queenship studies focuses on the issues of the queen's agency, authority, identity, or patronage, expanding the field through the use of new methodological tools or concentrating on hitherto unexamined geographical regions.[59] However, despite its wide range, the current trend in queenship studies has completely overlooked the phenomenon of the bridal journey, perhaps, on the grounds of biographical approach or the too-narrow chronological-geographical scope, which does not allow for deeper analysis of nuptial travel. Alternatively, not being aware of Carafa's conduct book (see the discussion of sources) which opens up the issue of queen's agency on the way in a very vivid manner, the field lacked a necessary incentive to delve into this issue.

A good starting point for bridal-journey research is also the huge collection of case studies about the lives of queens, and although some of them may seem to be written in a rather old-fashioned biographical style, they still provide useful context and a source basis for individual weddings. Some older works even published a selection of archival sources, which still remain unpublished today or perished in the course of the turbulence of the modern age.[60] The case studies, naturally, evolve and incorporate cutting-edge trends in the field as well, and there are plenty of works which do not concentrate on the sterile biographical accounts of princely women, but observe their broader cultural impact (patronage of arts and pageantry, religious activities, mediation of social and gender norms, etc.).

As Karl-Heinz Spieß pointed out, the bridal journey involved a strong diplomatic element as well. Since the premodern state lacked a central system of bureaucracy, diplomatic relations depended strongly on the social status of the actors involved. That is why the persons for the bridal trains were carefully selected, and it is at the end of the fifteenth century that a branch of jurisprudence discussing the finest differences in status (so-called *jus praecedentiae*) is born.[61] The field of diplomatic history, however, has undergone significant changes in the past two decades. John Watkins's call for a modern re-evaluation of this rigid discipline aimed to break traditional periodisation, to shift from traditionally examined geographical areas, and to use a more interdisciplinary approach, exploring the previously unobserved cultural implications of diplomatic practices, the role of women in diplomacy, or cultural differences during marriage negotiations.[62] This trend continues and evolves in the most recent scholarship as well. The so-called New Diplomatic History, based on the axiom that sociocultural practices are the very basis on which political relations were created, highlights symbolic communication, diplomatic ceremonies, gift-giving, ambassadors' agency, and many other cultural aspects hitherto

ignored.[63] John Watkins's most recent claim that early modern "diplomacy is no longer the monopoly of credentialed diplomats"[64] is especially valid for bridal journeys, which, given their internationality, elevated all their participants to the status of diplomatic agents.

Finally, literary studies. As John Watkins, who examined correlation between the interdynastic marriage and literature, states, "interdynastic marriage loomed so large in the medieval and early modern imagination that writers addressed it in works that had nothing to do with any particular match".[65] Mutatis mutandis, wedding journeys found their way into numerous literary genres, far exceeding chronicles, travelogues, or diaries. However, the impact of this event on—for example—medieval romances or plays is yet to be revealed. A solitary attempt has been made by Antonio Cueto who made an intriguing analysis of the epithalamia poems in light of the classical *deductio* scheme.[66]

Sources

The sources can be divided into three main groups: narrative texts (chronicles, travelogues, festival books), correspondence including other various forms of archival documentation (inventories, financial logs, contracts), and literary sources. Before delving into each of these groups, the cornerstone of the topic, that is *De institutione vivendi* by Diomede Carafa, must be addressed. This oeuvre constitutes the only known medieval and early modern conduct book for the bridal journey.[67] Although some minor instructional texts pertinent to the nuptial journeys are extant, such as mandates for envoys and leading members of the bridal train and household ordinances, none of them reaches the complexity and scope of *De institutione*. Born in 1406 or 1408 in Naples, Carafa spent almost an entire life in the service of the Aragon monarchs, even helping them to conquer his homeland. His loyalty brought him many influential titles and positions, amongst those being a tutor and private counsellor to the members of royal family. Even though lacking the scholarly background, he authored several *memoriali* (one of them is *De institutione*), addressed to the Aragonese princes and princesses, in which he tried to encapsulate his recommendations for military and courtly life, diplomatic encounter, or good government, which he acquired from his own experience.[68]

Originally written for Beatrice of Aragon [1476], *De institutione* envisages a whole set of activities which the queen on the way to her husband might engage in, and thus prepare herself for her imminent life- and status-change. These encompass, but are not limited to, methods of obtaining the favour of her soon-to-be husband, how to treat the foreign envoys and courtiers, how to take care of the bridal household, which gestures and acts to use during the farewell to her family and the first encounter with her husband, how to use her new language, and most important of all, how to create a positive public perception. This range of themes strongly contrasts with other extant instructional sources,

for instance, Charles V's instruction for the journey of his nephew Maximilian II to Spain [1548], which in three pages mostly covers etiquette issues (e.g. how to address Italian and Spanish lords).[69] Therefore, given its unique character, Carafa's work will be heavily used throughout the entire book. Since it was first published only in modern times, there is little chance that any other princess than Beatrice had an opportunity to consult it. The luxuriously decorated Latin manuscript (Figure 1.1), now stored in the Biblioteca Palatina in Parma, was probably sent as a wedding gift to Beatrice in 1476 or soon afterwards—a simpler, unadorned version in Neapolitan vernacular which was handed over to the princess upon her departure from the hometown is not extant—was originally a part of the Biblioteca Corviniana at Buda Castle. Before the capture and subsequent destruction of the library by the Ottomans, two princesses, Anne of Bohemia and Mary of Hungary, could have had access to it, but this hypothesis remains wishful thinking.[70] Still, the precepts contained in it might have reflected contemporary conventions and ideals that have not survived in any other source.

The narrative sources cannot be strictly categorised as they oscillate between the genre of chronicles and diaries on one side, and festival books on the other. First, there are larger chronicles, on a national or city level, which sporadically refer to, or fully describe, the ceremonies and festivities related to bridal journeys: to this group belong for instance Rui de Pina (for Eleanor of Portugal, 1451/1452), Jan Długosz (for Elizabeth of Habsburg, 1454), Marino Sanuto (for Margaret of Parma, 1533), or Lorenzo Padilla (for Joanna of Castile, 1496).[71] A great advantage of this sub-category lies in its relatively good accessibility, because as well-known sources, they have been (re)published since the dawn of modern scholarship. On the other hand, there is a potential pitfall as well: since the chronicles, as great national/city narratives, were written long after the events they portray, the evidence they provide could be of a rather schematic and stereotypical nature. Although they could be the only source for the particular journey (e.g. Elizabeth of Habsburg, 1454) and possess interesting details, they are not very rich in documentation and this work uses them only sporadically.

Of more revealing character are the *Chroniques* of Jean Molinet as well as the *Historia austrialis* (known also as *Historia Friderici*) and *Commentaries* by Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini that provide information on journeys related to the Low Countries (Maximilian I, 1477, Joanna of Castile, 1496, Margaret of Habsburg, 1497 and 1501) and Eleanor of Portugal, respectively.[72] In contrast to the chronicles mentioned above, these texts devote longer sections to nuptial transfers, reporting the entire course of events and specifying the logistical and ceremonious details, but unlike the festival books, they do not eschew moments of crisis and sometimes, provide the reader with their own evaluation of the episodes. Their special attention to the journeys might be explained by the positions of the authors, who as court historiographers and/or as direct participants of the prince(ss)'s passage, were at the centre of events. Regarding the

FIGURE 1.1 Cola Rapicano, Diomede offers his booklet to Beatrice of Aragon. The frontispiece of the manuscript contains the Latin version of Carafa's *De institutione vivendi*. MS Parm. 1654, fol. 4r., parchment, tempera, ca 1476. Parma, Biblioteca Palatina. With the kind permission of the Biblioteca di Parma.

occupation of the creators, one ought to be always cautious about the potential encomiastic bias, however, as modern scholarship reveals, a positive predisposition towards the princely patron is not as automatic as one might think.[73]

The same applies for the oeuvres of Cerbonio Besozzi, documenting the passage of Maximilian II [1548], and an anonymous diary of Ferdinand of Bavaria's trip to Italy on the occasion of Joanna of Habsburg's nuptials [1565].[74] Besozzi, being included in the wedding train as a musician to Cardinal Madruzzo of Trent,[75] was an eyewitness of the events and he offers a long and vivid portrait of the journey, describing ceremonies and entertainment offered to the prince, but it is not limited to this. Again, on account of his occupation, Besozzi pays greater attention to the deeds of his patron, but again, he does not pass in silence over the issues and critical points brought up en route. Moreover, in the tradition of travelogue literature, he pays attention to the environment and cultural differences. The Bavarian log too is a no less vivid account of Ferdinand's journey. As a result of various delays, the prince was behind schedule of the main bridal train and thus he and his household had to travel separately, and thus the text is not a direct portrayal of the bride's movement. Nonetheless, this diary is a precious piece of documentation as it preserves the stories, sometimes of a very unflattering character, of what had happened to the bridal company just a short time before.

The version of the events, as exposed by Ferdinand's diary, contrasts strongly with the travel accounts, compiled for the 1561 and particularly the 1565 journeys of Eleanor, Joanna, and Barbara of Habsburg.[76] These two pieces can be categorised as so-called festival books.[77] Naturally, we possess many others representatives of this genre from earlier times as well, but they were usually confined to the documentation of the princess's final solemn entry. Aside from the two long accounts, there are many much shorter texts that specify the order of ceremonies but are more similar to plain ambassadorial reports.[78] Heavily concentrating on an order and character of ceremonies, enumerating numbers and names of the participants, these accounts present the journey as a continuous passage of triumphs and public entertainment.

A completely separate kind of narrative document is the travelogue by Nicholas Lanckman of Falkenstein, written for the transfer of Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452].[79] As one of the leading figures of the reception embassy, Lanckman records not only the progress of the princess's journey to her husband, Emperor Frederick III, but also the adventures of the embassy on the way to Lisbon as well as the course of wedding festivities in this city. The details included in this extensive account shed light not only on logistical and ceremonial features but also on the princess's agency and an elaborated set of rituals that was staged for Eleanor's farewell. Published and translated into German for the first time at the beginning of the sixteenth century, this text was dedicated to Eleanor's son, Emperor Maximilian I, and thus it should be read in the context of the emperor's *Ruhmeswerk*.[80]

The second important group of documentation is princely and diplomatic correspondence, mostly in an unpublished form,[81] even though a large quantity

of epistolary material, especially for the older periods, found its way into nineteenth-century editions.[82] Occasionally we are fortunate enough to have direct testimonies from the members of the princess' entourage, or even from the princesses themselves.[83] This sort of evidence is crucial for the reconstruction of the material aspects (e.g. bridal train and its rationale, overall logistics) but it is also indispensable for the analysis of ceremonial features, protocol involved with the farewell and the first meeting of the newlyweds, as well as for the prince(ss)'s actions leading to and on the way to his/her consort (e.g. gift-giving, linguistic interaction, first epistolary exchange with the newlyweds, and so forth).

Of no lesser significance are legal and financial sources, namely wedding contracts and fiscal logs, although for the studied sample of journeys, they are not so revealing as correspondence. The marital treaties can contain the terms relating to the princess's passage, specifying its dates, locations, and costs. For Maximilian's trip to Spain [1548] we even possess an entire account book pertinent to the journeys alone, which shed light not only on the itinerary, but also on the everyday reality of the travel experience, such as the number of horses required, lodging costs, or the gifts bought and given during the journey.[84] A very similar source is extant for the journey of Maximilian's daughter Elizabeth to France [1570].[85]

The last source category is literary sources, mainly wedding poems and orations, so-called epithalamia. This term may denote various literary compositions, such as lyric or epic poems, orations in prose or in verse, that have some connection to matrimony and draw on the classical tradition of nuptial songs, exhorting a bride to enter a groom's bed *(thalamos)*, along with the *hymenaei* and other songs that were sung during the Roman nuptial procession, *domum-ductio*, which is described in the first section of the Introduction. The evidence emerges that various kinds of songs were sung in the course of this Roman (and also during a slightly different Greek) ceremony: during the procession, at the start of the nuptial night, during the waking-up of the wedding pair, or in the course of the morning following the wedding night. These songs provided inspiration for poets, most likely, in the earliest stages of Greek literature in the seventh century BC; however, the most classic pieces of the epithalamic genre, which began to denote every kind of wedding-related composition, were authored by Sappho, Theocritus, Catullus, Statius, Claudian, and others.[86] Drawing upon actual wedding traditions, these epithalamia are a valuable source for reconstruction of the ancient nuptials; however, they are not without challenges as they present a highly idealised version of events, taking place in a flamboyant atmosphere and under the auspices of gods, highlighting the virtues of the newlyweds (virginity of the bride and bravery of the groom).

Although some forms of lyric epithalamium, imbued with religious mysticism, survived throughout the Middle Ages,[87] the revival of this genre took place in Renaissance Humanism. Having recognised its value for panegyrics, the humanists and court poets started to recreate it, trying to extol their princely donors and shaping their wedding feasts as a divine enterprise. Since the passage

of the bride played a major role in the ancient Roman ritual and subsequently, in the poetry, the humanists subconsciously adopted not only the genre as such but its emphasis on the journey as well. The rhetorical epithalamium, mostly bearing the form of an oration, had a slightly different origin than its lyrical counterpart and evolved from medieval wedding sermons. However, its panegyrical undertone is similar, if not more intense: as Anthony D'Elia, who studied a large sample of fifteenth-century Italian nuptial orations, showed, humanist authors did not hesitate to use this medium to propel political propaganda by lineage, dynastic history, wealth, or personal virtues of the newlyweds.[88] What is more, these texts served as a platform for expressing views on sex and marriage, and very often, they did not eschew extolling bodily pleasures either.[89]

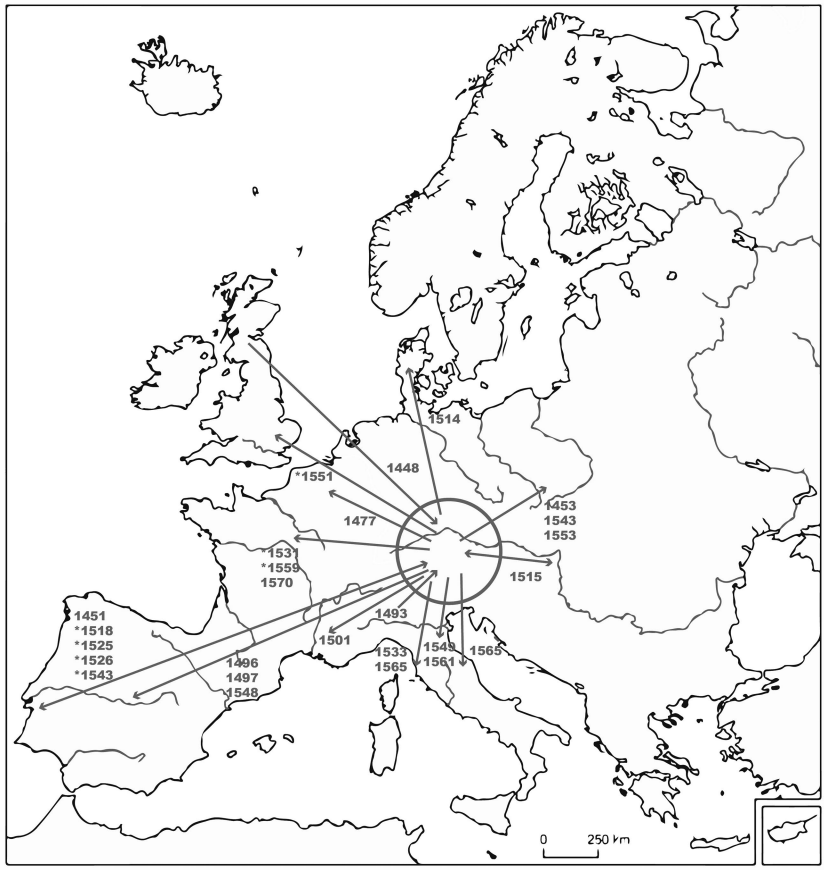
There are many of these rhetorical and poetic pieces, first in Italy, where humanists revived the genre of wedding poetry in the 15th century, but later across Europe as well. For the marital unions of Austrian Habsburgs in 1448–1565, there are up to twenty pieces extant: three lyric and one in-prose composition for Bianca Maria Sforza [1493];[90] one poetic piece for Anne of Bohemia [1521];[91] five poetic pieces and one in-prose for Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543];[92] four lyric ones for Catherine of Habsburg [1553];[93] and two poetic and one in-prose epithalamium for Joanna of Habsburg [1565].[94] Unfortunately, despite the high number of these texts, only a handful of them are relevant for the analysis of the bridal journey's motifs.

Methodology and questions

The core of this monograph is based on my doctoral thesis, looking using the sample of seventeen Austrian-Habsburg weddings in 1447–1565. Why Habsburgs and why the turn of the sixteenth century? The sheer number of all spousal journeys hinders a systematic analysis of the entire medieval and early modern period. Influenced by my previous scholarly experience and the origin of Carafa's work which was a start point of my investigation into bridal journeys as a whole, I opted for the time span of 1450–1550. This period offers several advantages from a methodological point of view. First, its length (one hundred years) enables the observation of changes, trends, and a potential evolution in the way nuptial travelling occurred, especially so given the chosen century saw many precipitous changes impacting society on a macro-level such as Humanism, Reformation, the invention of the printing press. But the changes concerned the monarchical and dynastic sphere too, be it that the dawn and development of ceremonial rules and precedents for later periods or a gradual end to itinerant kingship and establishment of more permanent residence). Second, this time span provides a convenient source situation in terms of quality (more in-detail and better preserved records, moreover the emergence of completely new genres, such as festival books, humanistic wedding

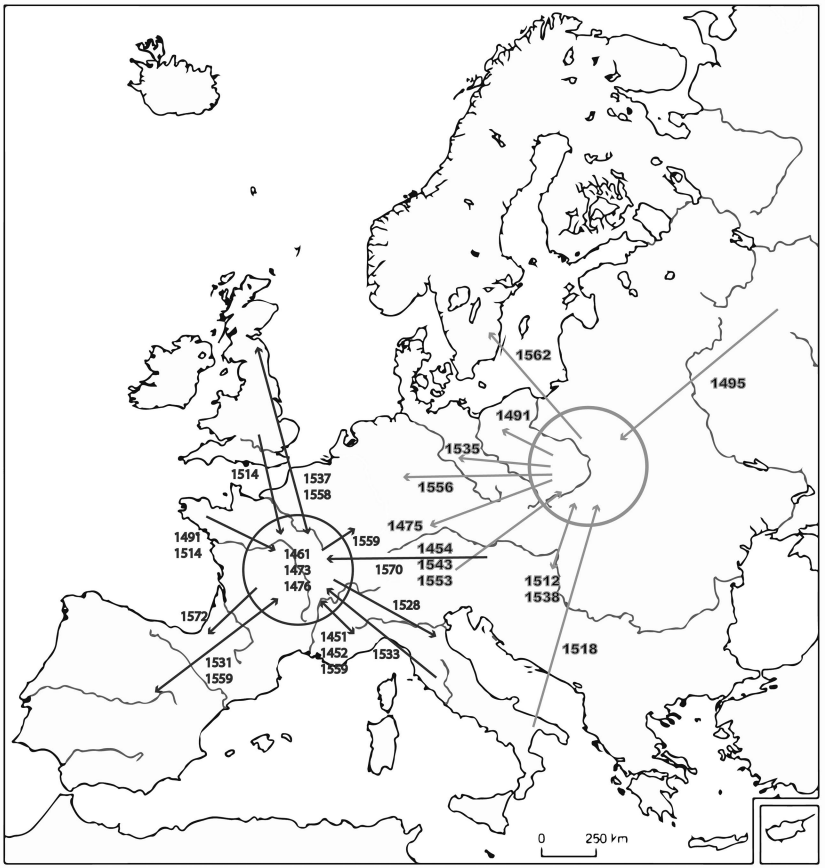
poems, and orations) and quantity (neither the scarcity of earlier centuries nor the overabundance of the later ones).

However, it was necessary to narrow the scope even further because in the selected time span, around three hundred royal and ducal weddings took place. Having compared the geographical extent of marital politics of three major European dynasties, Valois, Jagiellonian, and Habsburg (Maps 1.1 and 1.2),[95] the latter was chosen as a source sample for the doctoral thesis that forms the core of this monograph.



MAP 1.1 Diagram map showing twenty-six Habsburg transnational (excluding German) marriages in ca. 1450–1550 (Spanish branch marked with *). As we can see, the Habsburg nuptial net covers almost the entire Europe. Naturally, neither this nor the following map does not show the journeys' actual trajectories, that is, many princesses wedded in the House of Habsburg did not travel to Austria (in the circle). Rather, it represents the sheer scope of the Habsburg matrimonial web in this timeframe.

Given their geographical extent, stretching from Portugal to Poland, from Scotland to Florence, this corpus of weddings was the most likely candidate to yield valuable results in terms of their cultural (i.e. social, gender, and literary) implications. The particular marriage policy of the Habsburgs led to a transnational web of nuptial alliances, or, as Paula Sutter Fichtner puts it, a spectacular matrimonial conglomerate,[96] and Habsburg members, either males or females, thus had to travel to many, and sometimes quite distant, parts of Europe, overcoming cultural or later religious differences.[97] None of the other princely houses offers a more trans-European set of wedding alliances, since due to their firmly localised power centres they did not tend to stretch their wedding bonds beyond their most immediate neighbours (Map 1.2).



MAP 1.2 Comparative diagram of the Valois (in blue) and the Jagiellon (in green) marriages ca 1450–1550. In comparison to the Habsburg wedding alliances, members of the Valois and Jagiellon wed (with some exceptions) their neighbours.

The Habsburgs wed their neighbours as well, however, their domains—at least in this period—lacked a centralised basis, and therefore their marriage trajectories cut across the whole of Europe.

Also, the Habsburg geographical instability in this period is important from the point of view of the court and dynastic ceremonies, which are likely to be more liable to negotiations and changes than the more stabilised courts of the Jagiellonians and the Valois. Sure, as Katarzyna Kosior showed, even the French and Polish royal houses prioritised in wedding protocol the current political needs over their dynastic customs, however, the ceremonial variations quoted in her study still seem minor in comparison with the Habsburgs (for instance, no Valois or Jagiellonian king travelled to the bride, etc.).[98] Examining such a dynamic princely house as the Habsburgs would thus yield a much better understanding of the wedding transfer, which is not tied to a stable protocol of only one cultural sphere or dynastic tradition but is open to constant negotiations of wedding parties.

The chosen timespan (1450–1550) is also a period for which the notoriously known Habsburg motto *Bella gerant alii, tu felix Austria nube* is most fitting. By a series of very fortunate marital unions, the house extended its rule over a great part of Europe: the marriage of Maximilian I and Mary of Burgundy [1477] brought control over a majority of domains previously controlled by the Valois dukes of Burgundy. The offspring of this union, Margaret and Philip, concluded the double marriage with the heirs of Castile Aragon, Joanna, and John [1496/1497]. A sudden death of the latter meant acquisition of the two Iberian kingdoms and by extension also vast territories that the Spanish crown held in Europe and as time went on in America too. Maximilian I, personally participating in the first crucial match and brokering the second one, managed to negotiate even the third one, which, however, came to fruition only after his death. The second double wedding [1515/1521], this time with the Jagiellonian dynasty ruling over Bohemia and Hungary, between Maximilian's grandchildren Ferdinand and Mary on one side and Anne and Louis on the other, enabled the Habsburgs to lay claims of the two Central-European kingdoms. Soon afterwards, with the death of King Louis II in the battle of Mohács against Ottomans, this claim was indeed advanced and it laid foundation of the future Habsburg monarchy. The acquisition of these territories was boosted by the imperial status, held by senior members of the house incessantly from Maximilian I's father, Frederick III.[99]

However, the main advantage of the Habsburg marital web, that is its pan-European range, is at the same time its main disadvantage: the documents are spread across the countries around the continent in several languages, making the research in every archive that would be relevant to the Habsburg weddings virtually impossible. Therefore, as a result of the linguistic, financial, and temporal limitations as well as disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the main investigation concentrated on seventeen marital unions of Austrian

Habsburgs (listed in Appendix 2). For the purposes of this book and a broader comparative perspective, material from other thirty journeys was added.

The Habsburgs as a dynasty and its marital policy has been elaborated on by many scholars. A list of numerous excellent monographs or exhibition catalogues covering the lives, cultural patronage, or residences of the Habsburg emperors, kings, queens, archdukes, and archduchesses in this period would be long. From the plethora of studies, one has to highlight the five-volume biography of Emperor Maximilian I by Hermann Wiesflecker (published in 1971–1986) that offers an excellent historical introduction to the second half of the fifteenth century as a whole. More specifically, the Habsburg weddings, as a key element of the house's success in this period, have been also addressed.[100] From the two major works on the subject, Cyrille Debris's comprehensive study represents an impressive handbook for Habsburg nuptials in the high and late Middle Ages, showing in great detail the motivations for marriage, its diplomatic background, the forms of dotal agreements, and the rites involved.[101] Karl Vocelka's book, chronologically placed in the second half of the sixteenth century, on the other hand, opts for a totally different approach.[102] Rather than looking into every marriage concluded in this time frame and presenting an overall picture of dynastic marital policy, he offers a collection of case studies and in each of these points to a particularly characteristic feature of contemporary princely espousals, such as material preparations of ceremonies, proxy rites, or juridical background. However, none of these works, like the other scholarly literature as shown above, pays attention to the wedding journeys.

This monograph thus aims to fill this void. At the same time, it does *not* aspire to be an exhaustive evaluation of the wedding journeys in the second half of the fifteenth and the first half of the sixteenth century. Rather, using the rich Habsburg-related and other supplementary documentation, it aims to shed light on the phenomena connected with nuptial travelling. In a sense, it is a case study but the "case" does not mean one wedding but one princely house which serves as a probe. The objective is thus not to reconstruct the precise course of every journey in the sample but to reveal wider socio-cultural patterns with the help of the surviving material.

Structure of the book

This book illustrates the centrality of wedding transfers for premodern dynasties and monarchical order on various strata. *Dynasty* is often understood as synonym for monarchy or monarchical rule, but recent scholarship discerns it as a collective group, tied with kin relations and most importantly, a shared identity and agenda.[103] Given the combination of the journeys' singularity (for the dynasty, princely figures, realms—princesses were not expected to be seen again), multiterritoriality (covering many political and geographical lands), supranationality (encompassing different royal and social customs), liminality

(emancipating the princesses), and potential danger (inherent in all premodern travel) the bridal transfers were a perfect instrument to project the splendour and magnificence of the dynasties united in the marital alliance, to negotiate power and rank on the international level, to prepare the royal wives for their upcoming role, to forge relationships and bonds with foreign figures, and to extol and memorialise the dynasty. It is an event that does not fit any typologies of royal rituals or premodern travel. This work examines these functions in seven sections, whose order is roughly inspired by the chronological timeline of the journey (preparation—execution—memory) but takes a more thematical approach which is necessary for a comparative analysis of the phenomena. Inevitably this approach delays, for instance, the analysis of the voyage's starting point—the bride's farewell—to the central part of the thesis, however, it is done so with the aim to treat each element within its thematic group. In the end, strict adherence to chronological order would result in much overlap and repetitions and miss the arguments hidden in various segments of the journey.

Chapter 2 addresses the material side of the transfer. The point of analysis here is not to reconstruct the trajectories or roads of the particular journeys but to focus on the material setting of the travel, that is, logistics. Drawing comparisons with another type of travelling royalty, i.e. royal tours, the chapter shows the anxieties, motivations, and social networks that enabled—and sometimes complicated—the spousal transfer. Chapter 3 tackles the most noticeable aspect of the journey, the massive entourage accompanying the prince(ss). Its distinct but intertwined parts, bridal household and aristocratic retinue, are scrutinised with respect to their origins, functions, selection criteria, and motivations of the courtiers. They projected political unity and dynastic splendour on the outside, catered for the everyday needs of the princess en route, but also helped the princess with integration into her new environment or shaped her public perception. As the group in the closest proximity to the new queen or duchess, it had clear power connotations, and the two wedding parties vigorously negotiated the appointments and the unbalanced structure often became a source of later conflicts.

Chapter 4 looks at ceremonies and festivals on the way. First, it examines the transfer as a continuous stream of triumphs, solemn entries, spectacles, and entertainments. This highly choreographed staging, boosted by a newly emerging genre of festival books, functioned as an extension of the wedding festivities, often paid for by third-parties. Moreover, as it is argued, a trend towards greater festivisation, i.e. a qualitative and quantitative expansion of festive occasions, is discernible, which can be explained by the popularity of royal progresses or the gradual end to itinerant kingship. Moving on to the sacral dimension of the journey, that is, visiting holy shrines, participating in the liturgy, and blending of the travel schedule with the liturgical calendar, shows that the spousal transfers had a connection with the sacred and the participants sought divine aid en route to ensure a happy outcome to the trip as well as the entire marital union.

Chapter 5 shifts the ceremonial focus from the macro to the micro level, looking into ritual transition occurring in every nuptial, but having special meaning in the transfer of princely brides. Consisting of separation, liminal period, and incorporation, this ritual passage was diversified, blurred, and sometimes did not conclude with the wedding either. Verbal, non-verbal, and material means employed in this process are examined and it is demonstrated that the bride was not a submissive object, "handed over" from one male authority to another, but she took a very active part in it. Moreover, the gender differences between travelling bride and groom, not very visible in the material or festive layers, are clearly brought to light in this part. The males appear to have participated only partially in the ritual transition; moreover, the protocol in meeting the spouse was gender-based; whereas the incoming brides were usually united with the husbands in an extramural setting, the incoming grooms found their spouses in the intramural one.

Elaborating on the liminal character of the transfer, Chapter 6 argues that the bridal journeys enabled the princesses, empowered by a temporary absence of male authority, to exercise a significant amount of influence and agency. They used it for preparation for their future roles, as envisaged by Carafa's conduct treatise, or for building social ties with people on the way by means of gifts. Finally, the last chapter examines the aftermath of the journey in literary compositions. By looking into the newly emerged genre of epithalamia, Humanistic wedding poems and orations, as well as the semi-biographical works of Emperor Maximilian I, this section contends that the nuptial transfers were an ideal framework for preserving dynastic memory and self-affirmation, either by exploiting the motifs of travel dangers or triumphalism. By so doing, this book aims to establish bridal journeys as an autonomous type of travel and sheds light on the reasons behind their hitherto overlooked cultural dynamics on the trans-European scale. It attempts to deepen our knowledge of not only premodern travel but also medieval and early modern court history, festivities and rituals, gender and women history, as well as diplomatic history.

Notes

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3 Karl-Heinz Spieß, 'Europa heiratet. Kommunikation und Kulturtransfer im Kontext europäischer Königsheiraten des Spätmittelalters', *Historische Zeitschrift. Beihefte* 40 (2006): 441–446.

4 Karin Frei et al., 'Tracing the Dynamic Life Story of a Bronze Age Female', *Scientific Reports* 5 (21 May 2015): 10431.

5 Frei et al., 5.
6 Sophie Bergerbrant, 'Revisiting the "Egtved Girl"', in *Arkeologi og kulturhistorie fra Norskekysten il Østersjøen. Festskrift til professor Birgitta Berglund [Archeology and Cultural History from the Norwegian Coast to the Baltic Sea. Essays in Honour of Professor Birgitta Berglund]*, ed. Ragnhild Berge and Merete Moe Henriksen (Trondheim: Museumsforlaget, 2019), 32.
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8 Bergerbrant, 'Revisiting the "Egtved Girl"', 31–33.
9 Kristian Kristiansen, *The Rise of Bronze Age Society: Travels, Transmissions and Transformations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 68, 74.
10 Karen K. Hersch, *The Roman Wedding. Ritual and Meaning in Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 56, 220 and elsewhere.
11 Hersch, 141–142.
12 The summary of the rites in Hersch, 223. The particular features and the symbolic meaning of the *domum deductio* are elaborated in Chapter 7.
13 Robert Bartlett, *Blood Royal: Dynastic Politics in Medieval Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 11–17.
14 Ibid. Byzantines did participate on the bride-exchange even before the radical changes of the empire in the twelfth century but mostly it was one-way stream—they sent their princesses abroad but the emperors usually did not take any wife outside the empire.
15 Bartlett, *Blood Royal*, 14.
16 Bartlett, 15–16, 20.
17 Bartlett, 25–31.
18 Margaret L. King, 'A Return to the Ancient World?', in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern European History, 1350–1750*, ed. Hamish Scott, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 18–19.
19 Desiderius Erasmus, *Literary and Educational Writings, 5 and 6: Volume 5: Panegyricus / Moria / Julius Exclusus / Institutio Principis Christiani. Querela Pacis. Volume 6: Ciceronianus*, ed. A. H. T. Levi, Collected Works of Erasmus (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 278–279.
20 Ibid.
21 Gregory of Tours, *Libri historiarum X*, ed. Bruno Krusch and Wilhelm Levison, Monumenta Germaniae historica, Scriptorum rerum Merovingicarum (Hannover: Hahn, 1951), 317–319 (liber VI, chap. 45).
22 Gregory of Tours, 331, 363 (liber VII, chap. 9 and 39).
23 E. T. Dailey, *Queens, Consorts, Concubines: Gregory of Tours and Women of the Merovingian Elite* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 132–140.
24 Jean Joinville, *Histoire de saint Louis, Credo et Lettre à Louis X*, ed. Natalis de Wailly (Paris: Librarie de Firmin Didot frères, fils et cie, 1874), 347. It was Blanche of France (1282–1305), sister of Philip IV, marrying Duke Rudolph III, son of King Albert I, in 1300.
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95 The visual design of these diagrams are inspired by the ones in Karl Heinz Spieß's article, which show the marital exchange of among the English, French, Danish, and Hungarian princely houses in 1200–1500. Karl-Heinz Spieß, 'Internationale Heiraten und Brauschätze im Spätmittelalter', in *Die Visconti und der deutsche Südwesten. Kulturtransfer im Spätmittelalter / I Visconti e la Germania meridionale. Transferimento culturale nel tardo medioevo*, ed. Peter Rückert and Sönke Lorenz (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2008), 124–129.

96 Paula Sutter Fichtner, 'Dynastic Marriage in Sixteenth-Century Habsburg Diplomacy and Statecraft: An Interdisciplinary Approach', *The American Historical Review* 81, no. 2 (April 1976): 243.

97 The overall evaluation of the Habsburg marital alliances from the 13th to 18th century in Joseph F. Patrouch, '"Bella Gerant Alii." Laodamia's Sisters, Habsburg Brides: Leaving Home for the Sake of the House', in *Early Modern Habsburg Women: Transnational Contexts, Cultural Conflicts, Dynastic Continuities*, ed. Anne J. Cruz and Maria Galli Stampino (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 25–38.

98 Kosior, *Becoming a Queen*, 23–59.

99 Karl Vocelka, *Habsburgische Hochzeiten 1550–1600: kulturgeschichtl. Studien zum manieristischen Repräsentationsfest*, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für neuere Geschichte Österreichs ; Bd. 65 (Vienna: Böhlau, 1976), 11–13.

100 A slightly later period examines Margaret M. McGowan, ed., *Dynastic Marriages 1612/1615: A Celebration of the Habsburg and Bourbon Unions* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

101 Cyrille Debris, *'Tu Felix Austria, nube': la dynastie de Habsbourg et sa politique matrimoniale à la fin du Moyen Age (XIIIe-XVIe siècles)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005).

102 Vocelka, *Habsburgische Hochzeiten 1550–1600*.

103 Natalia Nowakowska, 'What's in a Word? The Etymology and Historiography of Dynasty – Renaissance Europe and Beyond', *Global Intellectual History* 7 (2020): 453–474.

2

HOW TO CONVEY A BRIDE OR GROOM? WAYS AND MEANS

Before discussing anything else, we should turn our attention to the analysis of the props that enabled the actual physical transfer of the (bride)grooms, namely route, means of travel, and lodgings. At the first sight, there is nothing that would set these aspects apart, in other words, one would presume that the travel of princ(ess)es would be the same as for any other medieval traveller. However, this chapter aims to prove the very opposite: these mundane matters did not lack the political and dynastic meanings that stemmed from the inner nature of princely nuptials.

The first feature that singles out bridal journeys in contrast to the other types of premodern mobility is their scope: they involved not only a princely traveller and her/his household but also a massive enterprise in terms of human resources. As we will see in Chapter 3, it always involved several hundred, if not thousands of people, which made these journeys one of the biggest royal events in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In overall scale, bridal journeys are only comparable to royal summits, such as the Field of Cloth of Gold in 1520 (which was attended by roughly 1130 English and the same amount of French noblemen)[1] or *Italienzugs* of the emperors-in-waiting (for instance, Frederick III was allegedly accompanied by 4,000 knights).[2] Yet unlike imperial rides or royal summits which happened only once or twice a century, wedding journeys occurred much more often. Due to their scope, they posed significant logistical challenges, and what is more, negotiations with the other wedding party and third-party hosts could add to the complications. The Ferrarese envoy in 1565 for instance recounts how the cardinal of Trent—third-party host—is anxious about the arrival of the bridal company amounting to 3,000 horses, and "does not know how to lodge them, reckoning that Trent cannot supply it".[3]

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In order to proceed smoothly, simultaneous movement of such a mammoth group of people had to be carefully planned—the itinerary, taking into account safety measures, timetable, and accessible accommodation capacities needed to be drafted beforehand. Still, even with enormous effort to ensure an easy transition, the bridal trains were often confronted with circumstances that forced them to improvise and compromise in terms of material comfort or missed deadlines. How did the nuptial travellers and their companions react to such a change of plan? And why, despite all the intricate planning, did many journeys take place in an inconvenient season of the year? What were the motives behind the timetable? Also, regarding the means of travel, how were hundreds of horses acquired?

The materiality of medieval and early modern travel, naturally, has not been ignored by scholarship.[4] Nonetheless, logistics of spousal journeys has not been systematically considered on a large-scale group of cases, and as a result, its overall implications have not been evaluated. Delving into timing and route, means of travel, and lodgings, this chapter shows that the planning and execution of spousal transfers were very much politically and dynastically motivated. As a major monarchical ritual, bringing together two princely houses, their dominions, and many times, third-party players, the date of departure was liable to complicated negotiations that tried to fit in with all parties' demands. Although the journeys, as one of a few monarchical ceremonies that exposed its partakers to physical danger, were carefully planned in order to prevent catastrophe and discomfort, paradoxically, dynastic agenda eclipsed this all. Therefore, material considerations were not only a physical backbone of this important event but a forum that for the first time echoed ambitions, motivations, and desire for magnificence of the princely houses united in marriage.

As a point of comparison, analogies will be drawn with other types of mobility, connected with medieval and early modern monarchy, that is, the royal progress and partially the *Italienzug* of Frederick III, during which he met his spouse Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452]. Despite different motivations, nuptial journeys and these travels share many common points also in outer form, so a comparative analysis of these two might produce a better comprehension of the modes in which princely figures and their surroundings operated.

Planning the route

Naturally, the route of the bridal journey was debated in advance as it was necessary to prepare not only lodgings but also supplies and safe conduct for the numerous retinue accompanying the princess. Walter von Stadion was responsible for the smooth transition of Bianca Maria's journey [1493]. As the itinerary was originally supposed to lead through Chur, Bregenz, Bludenz, and Lake Constance, coming to an end in Freiburg, he took care in preparing of lodgings and an abundance of provisions at every stop on the planned route. The special

arrangements were made in the final destination, the quarters were distributed according to the person's rank, supplies for many guests and several thousand more horses were provided, even adornments, such as tapestries or lanterns, were ordered.[5] Yet all this thorough preparation was abandoned since the route of the journey had to be changed due to the poor quality of the roads, which would thwart the plans of Bianca in Freiburg by Christmas.[6]

The other obstacles for smooth or any movement were natural elements, such as rivers. River waterways, if navigable, were often used to transport princess's belongings and trousseau, and even to accelerate the moving of the bridal company for some legs of the journey, since this type of transport could have been much cheaper than travel by land, for instance, in early Middle Ages it was up to nine times more economic.[7] But rivers could become an obstacle too: as a result of a frequent scarcity of fords and bridges the bridal company often faced the dilemma of whether they should alter the originally planned route. On the way from Correggio to Bologna, Joanna of Habsburg's [1565] retinue was supposed to make an overnight stay in San Giovanni in Persiceto but this way was quite long, and on the top, it encompassed the crossing of two rivers by narrow bridges that would slow down the progress even more. On the suggestion of the local lord, the competent authorities in the bridal train thus decided that it would be better to travel and stay in Castelfranco Emilia which was closer and had good accommodation capacities, and moreover, the road thereto involved only one water crossing with a solid bridge.[8] Although Joanna and her companions still followed the original course,[9] their deliberation demonstrates how the bridal train cooperated with regional officials so as to avoid difficulties and delays. Sometimes the local government took an even more active part in the facilitation of the journey. For instance, Venetians let a pontoon bridge be constructed over the Adige River near Rovereto for Maximilian II's voyage to Spain [1548],[10] and nearly two decades later also for Joanna and Barbara's journeys [both in 1565].[11]

If multiple choices were the hand, the most pressing issue was to decide if the bridal train should follow naval or overland route. Despite all dangers connected with the sea travel, the sailing was the quickest and cheapest mode of transport. Due to the large number of variables, exact figures are difficult to calculate but some scholars estimate that the seafare was sixty times cheaper than land travel, even more effective than transport via river waterways as mentioned above.[12] Such a transfer was much faster too, for instance, Bona Sforza [1518] was able to make the entire sea leg, a half of entire journey from Manfredonia, Italy to Cracow, in just ten days. The second half, leading through mountains and plains of Carniola, Styria, Austria, and Moravia, took almost two months.[13] It is thus no wonder that the wedding party that insisted the bride(groom) travelled as quickly as possible advocated for the sea route. When deciding Anne of Cleves's itinerary [1539/1540], Henry VIII also tried to persuade the bride's relatives of the benefits of the naval voyage. In order to

showcase the safety measures, the presentation map was drafted (Figure 2.1) too.[14] In the end, however, concerns about Anne's health and security prevailed and she travelled overland.[15]

Still, the most important element in the planning of the route was the current political landscape. If a hostile third-party ruler lay between the domains of the two wedding parties, his realm had to be bypassed, as the passage of the bride would be—at best— not properly received, or—at worst— directly threatened. Often in these cases, the marital union sealed alliance against such third-party ruler, so it would be only logical for him to curb the journey by every possible means. This was precisely the case of the Spanish-Habsburg double wedding of 1496/1497 that was directed against France. As a result, the French territory had to be circumvented by sea and the entire Spanish navy was sent to escort both princesses.[16] When Franco-Habsburg relations ameliorated a couple of years later, Margaret of Habsburg [1501] could traverse France to reach her second husband, the duke of Savoy. Similar political motivations were behind the route of Frederick III [1451/1452] on his imperial ride: several rulers of Italy proposed his territories to be chosen as a way to Rome, accusing their rivals of perfidy. Italian rulers and city-states vied for the emperor's visit

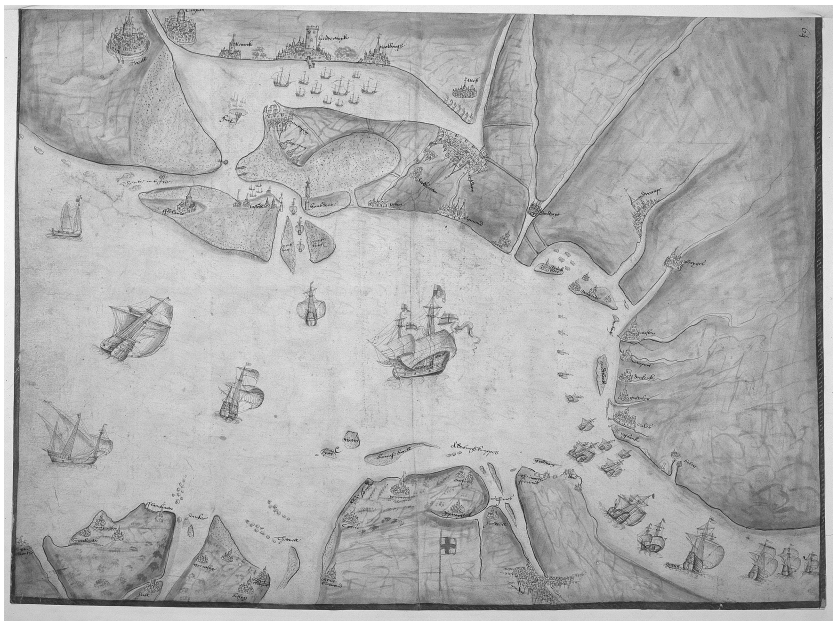


FIGURE 2.1 Anthony Anthony (?), Chart showing Anne of Cleves's projected journey from Harderwijk to Greenwich. The promised security is visualised via English vessels that safeguard Anne's ship (in the centre) from French threat. ©The British Library Board: Cotton Augustus I. ii. 64.

because they strove to achieve investiture of their domains or to get prestige by hosting such a prominent traveller.[17]

Wedding parties often left no stone unturned in laying down the groundwork for a smooth transition. Queen Isabella of Castile dispatched several letters to England, notifying both King Henry VII of England and the Spanish ambassador about the passage of the Spanish fleet transporting her daughter Joanna [1496] to Flanders and Margaret of Habsburg [1497] back to the Iberian Peninsula. Should any of these princesses enter an English port, the king is asked to provide them with a cordial reception and to treat them as his own daughters.[18] Eleanor of Portugal's naval voyage [1451/1452] did not involve such arrangements with third parties but Frederick III in the mandate for his representatives in Portugal specified that the princess's fleet should arrive at the Italian port of Talamone, and then, proceed to Siena where they were supposed to meet.[19] In the meantime, he sent to Talamone a delegation consisting of German ladies and noblemen, led by his secretary Michael Pfullendorf and Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, future pope Pius II.[20] They were supposed to fix the prices for supplies and to obtain safe conduct for Frederick, coming down to Italy to meet Eleanor and receive the imperial crown. Since both Eleanor and Frederick were running late, Piccolomini recalls in his *Commentaries* how he and the rest of the welcome party had to wait in Talamone for sixty days, "that were very dull for him and his party".[21] A devoted classicist like Piccolomini, however, took advantage of the spare time by visiting the nearby ancient monuments in Monte Argentario and Ansedonia.[22]

Eventually though, Eleanor arrived in Livorno, not Talamone, creating significant logistical chaos: the German welcome delegation had to quickly move several kilometres north; at the same time, the princess with her Portuguese company could not disembark in Livorno because that was not the port agreed upon, nor could they continue sailing to Talamone due to the direction of the wind. After a day of waiting, Eleanor and the marquis of Valença, a commander of the fleet, called a council which decided to send an envoy to Frederick asking him for guidance. Soon after Frederick resolved the matter by sending an additional group of nobles that should have joined the one coming from Talamone, and together they were supposed to greet the future empress in Pisa.[23]

Nonetheless such deviation from plans was not uncommon, especially when a naval passage was involved. Margaret of Habsburg [1497] too found herself in a different Iberian port to the rest of her navy. While the rest of the ships found a safe haven in Laredo, a strong sea wind blew away the princess's ship to Santander. Similarly as in Eleanor's case above, Margaret also did not hesitate to immediately send a special envoy to her husband and his royal parents, informing them about her whereabouts.[24] One can thus conclude that even though accidents and mishaps, leading to alteration of the proposed course of events, happened often, it was crucial for the bridal company to maintain contact with the host wedding party.

Adverse meteorological conditions were a particular nemesis of the nuptial transfer. Queen Isabella of Castile was allegedly quite worried about the sea passage of her daughter, Joanna [1496]. In one of his letters, the historian Pietro Martire d'Anghiera relates that after the princess's departure, the queen kept interrogating experienced navigators (amongst them was—according to Hermann Wiesflecker and Gillian B. Fleming—Christopher Columbus)[25] day and night about what sort of sea conditions the navy could be facing and what might have delayed Joanna's arrival in Flanders. Isabella's preoccupations were based upon the fact that the current season (autumn) was not a favourable time for sailing:

> [She] lamented over the [cruel] destiny of being obliged to send her daughter to remote Flanders in a season in which the sea was almost impassable due to the proximity of winter. On top of that, because of the enmity of the French, there was a shortage of regular mail by land.[26]

Eventually, the Spanish princess reached her destination safe and sound, yet her navy lost two ships—one Genovese carrack got stranded on a sand beach and another caravel smashed into it, breaking into two parts.[27] The lack of information about the princess's progress, manifesting in Isabella's frustration, again reveals the importance of continuous contact (with either wedding party) which the bridal expeditions were supposed to maintain. That reveals the level of importance which the dynastic leaders attached to the transfer, which, unlike other royal rituals, really involved a significant risk to life and limb.

Planning the time

In contradiction to what has been just said, all the effort striving to secure a smooth journey did not necessarily equate with the selection of the best period of year for travelling. Hence, in the end, the careful arrangements could have been thwarted by bad weather, occurring especially in the winter months. As Table 2.1 (below) shows, ten out of the seventeen Habsburg brides and grooms in 1448–1565 had to make their journey during some if not all winter months (marked with ⋆). In comparison, the royal tours, at least those of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, mostly took place during the summer and autumn months (from August to October), the progresses in winter were limited to the London area.[28]

Putting the prince(ss)'s life in jeopardy could have had serious repercussions for dynastic plans or the political landscape. One of the most notorious examples, although not from bridal travel, is the White Ship disaster of 1120, during which perished Edward I's only legitimate male heir, threw the English crown

TABLE 2.1 Starting and ending dates of the wedding transfers in our Habsburg sample

Prince(ss)	*A. Departure*	*B. Arrival*
C. *Eleanor of Scotland	Tours, October 1448	Meran (Tyrol), 12 February 1449
*Eleanor of Portugal	Lisbon, 12 November 1451	Pisa, 24 February 1452
*Elizabeth of Habsburg	Vienna,?	Cracow, 10 February 1454
Maximilian I	Vienna, 21 May 1477	Ghent, 18 August 1477
*Bianca Maria Sforza	Milan, 2 December 1493	Innsbruck, 23 December 1493
*Joanna of Castile	Laredo, 22 August 1496	Brussels, 9 December 1496
*Margaret of Austria	Vlissingen, 21 January 1497	Santander, 6 March 1497
*Margaret of Austria (2nd)	Brussels, 27 October 1501	Geneva, 8 December 1501
Mary of Hungary	Innsbruck,? 1521	Buda, 1521 (precise dates not known but it is presumed that Mary arrived in Hungary in summer)
Anne of Bohemia	Innsbruck,? 1521	Linz, before 26 May 1521
Elizabeth of Habsburg	Vienna, 21 April 1543	Cracow, 5 May 1543
Maximilian II	Augsburg, 10 June 1548	Valladolid, 13 September 1548
*Catherine of Habsburg	Innsbruck, 8 October 1549	Mantua, 22 October 1549
Catherine of Habsburg (2nd)	Vienna, July 1553	Cracow, 30 July 1553
Eleanor of Habsburg	Innsbruck, 14 April 1561	Mantua, 26 April 1561
*Joanna of Habsburg	Innsbruck, 14 November 1565	Florence, 16 December 1565
*Barbara of Habsburg	Innsbruck, 14 November 1565	Ferrara, 5 December 1565

into a long war of succession.[29] So how can one account for taking such a risk, given the level of importance inherent in the wedding journeys?

There are several ways to elucidate this apparent contradiction. An unfavourable timetable for the journey might have stemmed from the specific demands of one wedding party. On the one hand, there could have been a desire to slot the nuptial festivities into a major Christian (Christmas, Easter, etc.) or dynastic feast as we will see in Chapter 4. On the other hand, there was an instinct to avoid cancelation of the marital project as a whole. Even though international princely unions often staged proxy nuptials, matrimony not corroborated with a sexual act, the so-called consummation, was still potentially prone to annulment if one wedding party changed its mind. Only a successful bridal transfer and sexual intercourse could prevent this from happening.[30] This fear was clearly behind the timetable of Joanna of Castile [1496] whose parents were worried that Maximilian I would delay the wedding until the end of the war against the French. Since the double marital alliance between the

Habsburgs and Spain was tied to military assistance, the union might have lost its meaning once the campaign was over.[31]

Apart from this, the husbands might have asked the brides to travel in the hibernal months on the grounds of other personal reasons, as we will see in the chapter about sacred ceremonies, or alternatively, it might have been the will of the stars, or more precisely, a prediction by the courtly astrologer. Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] had to wait several days until Ambrogio da Rosate announced the right time to make a quick sail across Lake Como.[32] However, his prediction of sunny weather turned out to be rather unreliable as the very next day the princess's entourage had to face a terrible storm and nearly a shipwreck.[33]

The husband's demands, whatever they were, often resulted in clashes, as some royal parents were not so enthusiastic about the potential dangers caused by the winter season and intentionally kept postponing the departure of their daughter. For instance, the Polish envoys, taking care of Bona Sforza's transfer [1518], had to negotiate arduously with Isabella of Aragon, the princess's mother, over the time of departure.[34] Out of "motherly affection" towards her daughter, Isabella purposely kept postponing the date of departure, "so her daughter does not have to sail in winter months".[35] Sometimes it was the representatives of another wedding party that took into consideration the princess's safety. Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452] was originally scheduled to arrive in Italy and meet with her husband by November 1.[36] We are even told that the envoys of Frederick III, her future husband, sent to Portugal to fetch the princess, actively solicited for setting out before winter comes.[37] In the end, due to various factors (absence of wind, lengthy journey preparations, and over-elaborate festivities, see Chapter 4) Eleanor did not leave her homeland before mid-November, long after her scheduled arrival, and her flotilla had to face numerous storms on the way. In light of this, it is doubtful to what extent the envoys really demanded the expeditious departure. Nicolas Lanckman, the author of this piece of information, was, after all, a member of the said embassy and might have inserted the urge for the before-winter transfer in order to exonerate himself from the princess's delayed and turbulent, life-threatening voyage. Sometimes the postponement of the parting with an intention to avoid a hibernal journey actually made the situation much worse. The Castilian fleet that accompanied Joanna of Castile [1496] to Flanders and was supposed to bring Margaret of Habsburg [1497] back to the peninsula suffered terrible losses while wintering in the ports of Zealand. Not accustomed to withstand the cold temperatures, the escort reportedly lost several thousand of its members.[38]

The whims of weather were not the only source of vexation for the logistics of wedding transfers. A delay in the journey might have been caused by the preparation of festivities at the husband's court—Elizabeth of Habsburg [1454] was asked to wait on the outskirts of Cracow, in Skawina, because the *apparatus pro splendore magnificencie regis* (preparations of the king's magnificence) were not finalized yet.[39] Eleanor of Scotland's journey [1448] from Paris to Tyrol was originally supposed to lead through Alsace and Basel, but after she arrived

in Belfort, it became clear that this route was dangerous, since local aristocrats were in the middle of a small war. What is more, the news arrived warning the bridal company that a certain knight was planning a robbery during the crossing at Lake Constance.[40] As a result, a decision was made to proceed through Savoy and the Swiss cities Bern, Luzern, and Zürich, where the envoys of Duke Sigismund, Eleanor's groom, immediately managed to secure safe conduct.[41] Ultimately however, aside from two known exceptions—Joan of England [1348] and Joan of France [1371]—no prince(ss) was harmed or killed in the course of her/his nuptial transfer, so despite delays and accidents the overall goal was achieved.

The means of travel

The vehicles and modes of travel used for the bridal transfers did not differ from other premodern journeys, but given their goal—to convey a princely bride or groom, and by extension their social rank—they must have had a special angle, highlighting magnificence of the event. A preparatory list of items for the journeys of Mary of Hungary and Anne of Bohemia [1521] specifies three different types of wagon that were used.[42] First, each princess had at her disposal two personal, golden wagons *(Leibwagen guldiner)*, which might have resembled the *Prunkwagen* (Figure 2.2) that was presumably used during Eleanor of Portugal's journey [1451/1452].[43] Then there were two *Koblwagen*, suitable for

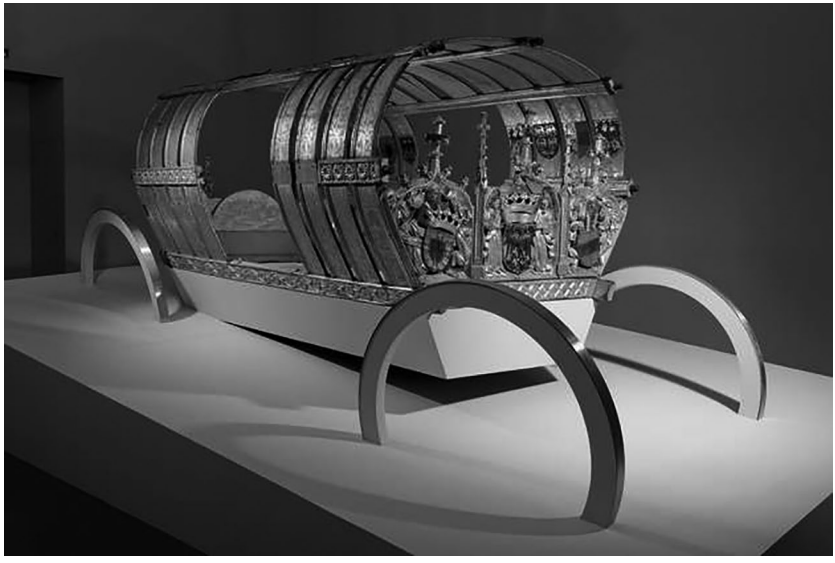


FIGURE 2.2 The luxurious carriage *(Prunkwagen)* ascribed to Eleanor of Portugal, around 1450, beech wood, encarved, painted, and gilded. Photo: Universalsmuseum Johanneum, Graz.

transportation of the members of the ladies' court, as this was a type of longer and round-vaulted carriage which was mostly reserved for women. And lastly, there was one *Camerwagen* for each bridal train, most likely for the shipment of the princess's belongings, her trousseau. Each wagon was dragged by four horses, except for the golden one to which six horses were hitched, and covered by various cloths, according to the wagon's type—the golden ones were covered with golden, red velvet, and "London" *(lindisch)* red woollen blankets, the other two types with less costly materials. For greater comfort, the wagons were equipped with carpets, velvet, and London-cloth cushions.

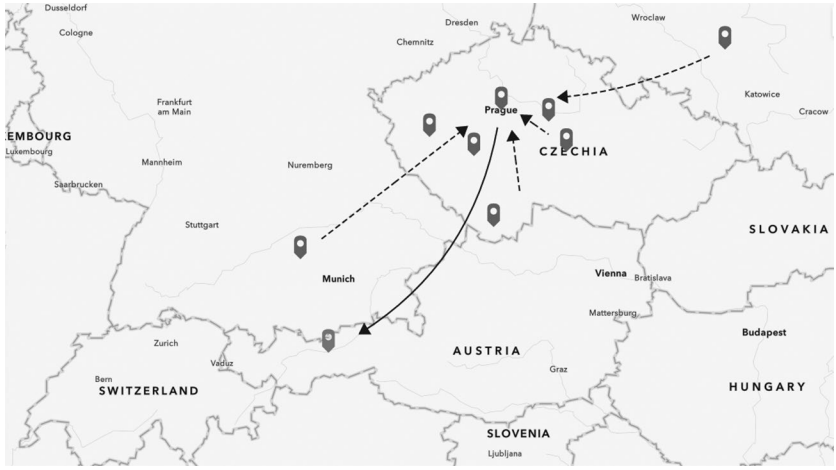
Other princesses, such as Bianca Maria Sforza [1493], were left with horses and mules until the groom sent them carriages.[44] Departing from Trent, Barbara of Habsburg [1565] was given a pair of horses, and a pair of ornamented litters in the name of her groom Duke Alfonso II of Ferrara who even sent a horse for Barbara's sister Joanna [1565], travelling with her for the first leg of the journey.[45] On the other hand, Florentines sent mules all the way to Bologna to pick up Joanna's baggage.[46] These examples elucidate how the mundane objects could have become occasions for gift-giving, the infinite dance of courtesies that accompanied princely weddings. In this respect, materiality as one facet of the journey points to its cultural-social layer which is be addressed in depth in Chapter 5.

The sample of weddings across the late medieval and early modern period enables us to observe the technical development of transport to some extent. Over the course of time, the wagons were replaced with lighter and more comfortable coaches *(Gutschi)* that can unarguably be traced back to 1561 journey of Eleanor of Habsburg to Mantua.[47] But it is likely that they were used even sooner as this type of carriage, differing from its predecessors by added suspension, regularly operated in the main European cities by 1550. Margaret of Habsburg [1497] is credited to be the first who brought this type of carriage to the Iberian Peninsula, although it took several decades to diffuse.[48] The carriages *all'ongaresca* (in Hungarian style), recorded in the 1549 entry of Catherine of Habsburg to Mantua, might indicate the same travel vessel, alluding to its Hungarian origin.[49] Coincidentally, the oldest still-extant coach was also in use during a princely wedding in 1561, when Dorothea of Denmark married Duke William of Brunswick-Lüneburg.[50]

The choice between a wagon and coach could have been motivated by other intentions other than the simple comfort of the traveller. Preparing the transfer to Florence four years later [1565], Joanna of Habsburg's steward asked the Florentine envoy Sigismondo de' Rossi what kind of vehicle was used in Italy, carriage or coach, presumably, in order to equip the bridal entourage with the means of travel that would seem appropriate to the other wedding party. De' Rossi replied that they used both but added that the steward and Austrians should not bother about either of them since all will be taken care of by the Florentines.[51] They indeed sent not only carriages but also horses and cases prior to the departure from Innsbruck.[52]

An essential part of every wagon or carriage was draught animals, mostly horses. The Vienna archives store a detailed inventory of horses and their equipment assembled before the joint journey of Barbara and Johanna of Habsburg to Italy [1565].[53] This seemingly dreary piece of administrative record unveils the sheer scope of socio-cultural ties that were necessary in order to assemble the horsepower for (still only a part of) the bridal trains. As the process was administered by their brother, Archduke Ferdinand, then residing in Bohemia, it took place in Prague.

Beside the various horse types (palfrey, wagon horses) and their appearances (white, brown, dapple grey, pied, and red-and-black pied), the account specifies the origin of the particular animals, offering a fascinating glimpse into the social network involved in the preparation. Two horses and six palfreys were acquired from Jews; one white and one pied palfrey by local aristocrats, Lord Úlický from Plešnice, a lesser nobleman, and William of Rosenberg, High Treasurer of Bohemia; two horses were offered by burghers; one horse was provided by a judge at the appellation court and one by some Spaniard. The wagon horses were obtained from a peasant and one from a burgheress. Although not visible at the first glance, the archduke's relatives were also involved: one riding and two wagon horses were also procured by Carl Welser and Catherine of Lokšany, the brother and aunt, respectively, of Ferdinand's morganatic and (for some time) secret wife Philippine Welser.[54] Also, as demonstrated by



MAP 2.1 A geographical origin of persons providing horses for the 1565 joint journey. The operation was coordinated by Ferdinand of Tyrol, then governor of Bohemia, so it is not clear whether the horses were gathered in Prague (dashed lines) or shipped gradually to Innsbruck which was the starting point of the bridal transfer, in red. (For better orientation, the map with modern-day political borders was chosen.)

the diagram map (Map 2.1), the geographical origin of the horse providers is intriguing: it stretched across Poland (two of three mentioned Jews were from there), Prague, and other Bohemian cities (Kutná Hora, Havlíčkův Brod), and Augsburg in Bavaria where Carl Welser was based.

Although discussed briefly, the details about the means of transport lay bare important features of wedding travel. First, the high status of the bridal travellers was inevitably mirrored in the vehicles used, so much so that these objects did not perform only their primary, functional goal but also accrued a deeper symbolic meaning since they materialized the hierarchical claims of the royal/ducal son or daughter. Second, in arranging these mediums, the mutual respect and expectations of the wedding parties entered into play, and to achieve the highest possible splendour the bridal train followed the most recent trends in transport. Lastly, agglomeration of the massive quantity of time to facilitate travel would not have been possible without a fascinatingly interconnected web of people, who only when brought together were able to provide a princess with the means to move. In this sense, Archduke Ferdinand's horse inventory attests—more than any other source—to what sort of impact the bridal journeys had at the contemporary society. Even for the relatively small expedition of 1565 (in comparison with others in our source sample amounting to only a few hundreds, not thousands) it was necessary to approach people from all around southern Germany, Bohemia, and Poland in order to provide a sufficient number of horses.

Lodgings

The bridal entourages, incorporating several hundred people, posed a considerable challenge to every host, be that a city, local lord, or monastery, and to the logistics of the journey as a whole. If the progress was not to cause chaos or embarrassment to each of the involved parties, the issue had to be addressed beforehand. Annibale Cavriani, sent on a diplomatic errand to Innsbruck and Vienna concerning the wedding of Guglielmo of Gonzaga and Eleanor of Habsburg [1561], refers to how he met Balthasar of Trautson, a son of the imperial marshal, who was a dear friend of his. Asked where he was heading, Trautson answered that he was going back to Rovereto, where he was a castellan, to prepare lodgings for upcoming Eleanor's upcoming passage, after having done the same in three or four other towns in Tyrol.[55] This short episode gives us only a glimpse of the extensive operation that the arrangement of quarters for the bridal train posed.

In contrast, when the English monarchs set off around their domains they could rely on a stable web of manors, palaces, monasteries, aristocratic or episcopal residences. The qualities of the host location could have decided whether the king would choose to visit a particular liegeman or not. The host, being responsible for the financial side, aimed for the best reception possible, as the sovereign's stay was a clear indication of favour and augmentation

of his status.[56] For the nuptial journey, the situation was more complicated in several aspects.

With regard to finances, the families usually split the expenses for the wedding transfer, for instance, in both Habsburg-Gonzaga weddings [1549 and 1561] the bride's relatives paid for costs made up to Trent whereas the groom paid the rest.[57] This copied an older practice that is traceable in the pre-fifteenth century Habsburg unions.[58] However, in our sample it is possible to find other, more asymmetric forms of financial arrangements. For instance, the expenses for Eleanor of Portugal's transfer [1451/1452] were covered by 10,000 florins deducted from her dowry (amounting to 60,000 florins in total);[59] Margaret of Habsburg's voyage [1497] to Spain was completely in the hands of the Catholic monarchs, her future in-laws. One can thus conclude that the final financial settlement was always dependent on the terms negotiated in the wedding contract; however, the whole issue deserves further research, drawing upon a wider sample of weddings from different periods and geographical parts of medieval and early modern Europe.

However, as we can see from the example stated in the beginning of this sub-chapter, the financial responsibility for a particular leg of the journey did not necessarily overlap with overall logistical responsibility. Rovereto, lying between Trent and Mantua, should technically have been under the management of the Mantuans, yet Trautson takes instruction from his Habsburg lords. On the other hand, Florentine envoys in 1565 tackled the means of travel and housing arrangements between Bologna and Firenzuola, even though according to old Habsburg practice as described by Cyrille Debris[60] they should have done so for the entire Italian leg of the journey, starting from Trent, as this was the place of a ritual handover of the bride.[61] Generally, it seems that each wedding party supervised logistical provisions in its respective territory; if the bride or groom passed through the dominions of the third party, this planning was left at the discretion of the host.

One example of third-party hosting is Genoa. For Maximilian II's visit, the Genovese magistrate selected houses and rooms in the city for the retinues of the princes and his companions. The burghers whose residences were chosen were ordered under pain of financial penalty, ranging from 25 to 100 scudi, to make their houses prepared and accessible to the persons, and were made responsible for the allocation of guests, as well as the guests themselves; in some special cases, the burghers were also commanded to provide additional beds.[62] Alternatively the local administration could have cooperated with the guest's agents. As we will see in the next chapter, hosting of such prominent guests was an attractive opportunity and the cities vied for the honour to shelter princely brides or grooms. In 1452, the Sienese wanted to honour the future emperor and empress, scheduled to meet before their city gate, to such an extent that they let Frederick's quartermaster assign the houses for lodging at will.[63]

Big cities could have sufficient capacities for accommodating a massive crowd of incomers even without distributing the houses of the burghers.

In Bologna, for instance, six hostels were capable of providing shelter to all the Germans accompanying Joanna of Habsburg.[64] Other locations were not so well-equipped to house such a massive group of individuals, so the entourage had to be split and accommodated in different places, or divided up and made to proceed gradually in parts.[65] Alternatively, the need for a temporary breaking-up of the retinue could be caused by the climate, for instance, Maximilian II had to divide his entourage into three parts for the Spanish leg of the journey where

> the summer heat makes one suffer from thirst, taverns and hostels are rare, water is scarce and unsanitary, there are almost no wells or springs, so many prepare a small flask […] well suited for drinking.[66]

The princesses and their inner circle were usually guaranteed the most luxurious shelters, such as palaces or monasteries. But unlike in royal progresses, where monarchs could alter the route depending on the quality of accommodation, the travelling bride(groom)s—unable to change direction at will—might have faced conditions that were much less appropriate for their status. Before the departure of Joanna and Barbara of Habsburg from Innsbruck [1565], the Florentine ambassador Bernardo Grazzini reassured Duke Cosimo that the Tyrolese mountains up to Trent, as harsh as they are, had many good lodgings since "every house is an inn, full of stoves, beds, and stables".[67] Yet the same could not be said about the cities beyond Trent, as the princesses were soon to experience. In Dolcè, a town lying between Trent and Verona, both princesses and their ladies' courts allegedly had to sleep on the floor as they were no beds or benches.[68] The steward of Ferdinand of Bavaria, travelling to Joanna's wedding in Florence a week after the princesses, records his memories of the town in his diary:

> […] although it is called nicely *Dolce* [meaning "sweet" in Italian], it was actually quite *amarum* [bitter]. In the hostel, […] downstairs, there was a kitchen, and then, moving upstairs by a shabby ladder with narrow rungs, there was a hall with no doors, windows, even fewer chairs and beds, but with one long table before a stove and two bedsteads with a little straw.[69]

Eventually, Ferdinand managed to get slightly better lodgings than the princesses, as a vicar offered him a room at his house. Although the chamber in the vicar's house, unlike the hostel, had a clean bed with mattresses, the Bavarian prince allegedly still grumbled about it because it was not a soft, feather bed as he was accustomed to from home. The author of the diary concludes the episode by saying that this is "not uncommon in Italy".

Despite this resolute statement, substandard accommodation was not solely an Italian feature. Describing the journey to her sister, Bianca Maria Sforza

gives an account of the poor conditions of lodgings in the Alpine valleys. In the Benedictine monastery of Müstair, the bridal company was not only given a "sad" wine to drink and even worse bread in such a small quantity that many of them did not dine at all, but what is more, they had to sleep on bunks. "Straw was the finest bed, for those who had it," she laments, "fire is not used here, and the stoves have an idle stench."[70] At the other places, such as in the Cistercian monastery in Stams,[71] the future empress and her companions received a much better reception, yet these lodgings did not deserve as vivid a portrayal as the bad ones. This seems to be the pattern for other journeys—we possess very few descriptions of the enjoyable lodgings whereas the inferior quality of the accommodation tends to be depicted in the darkest possible tones.

This stereotypical portrayal and accusing the other culture of having inferior (accommodation) standards brings our attention to the issue of otherness, perceived strongly during transition into another cultural ambience. En route to their spouses, brides, and grooms did not encounter only foreign ways of lodgings but also foreign forms of behaviour or customs that might have differed heavily from the bride/groom's original cultural background. Medieval people were well-aware of these differences and Carafa even offered the queen a caveat:

> Having left Italy, You will enter Germany. The life and customs of this nation are very different from ours. Still, Your Majesty should treat everybody in a kind and gracious way, manifesting that You are related to the emperor by blood.[72]

In general medieval encounters with the "other" always brought about questions concerning the observer's own identity, constructing the "other" as an inverted reflection of the self, either in a positive or negative sense. The strange and foreign, associated with the sense of not knowing and not belonging, helped to uncover or to create the identity of the onlooker by reaffirming their awareness of belonging to a certain social, religious, or economic group.[73] Hence, it is not without relevance that Carafa's counsel reiterates the queen's social status, an important part of her identity that should serve as a shield vis-à-vis the suspicious inspection of the foreigners, who might have questioned another part of her identity, that is, her ethnicity. The uncomfortable accommodation offered by foreigners, although documenting the logistical problems of the bridal journeys to some extent, must be read in this perspective too.

Beyond the inferior quality of material furnishings, accommodation could have become a culturally based problem from another point of view too, as the documents for Bianca Maria Sforza's unrealized but planned journey to Hungary [1488] reveal. In preparing proper housing for the Hungarian delegation that was to fetch the princess in Milan, the ducal counsellors Pietro da Gallarate and Pietro Landriano exhorted Duke Ludovico Sforza to consider

the possibility of lodging the foreign guests not in the burghers' houses but in the ducal palace since "this nation [=Hungarian] is very different, not only in language but also in lifestyle".[74]

Why did the counsellors deem cultural differences an obstacle to lodging the foreign guests with locals? Different languages and customs might have given rise to tensions or even conflicts—to draw Habsburg but not wedding-related examples—Flemings in the retinue of Charles V during his first visit to Spain were refused accommodation and attendance at a holy service in Valladolid since they had caused upheaval and crime.[75] Philip II's (again not wedding-related) sojourn in Genoa (1548) even sparked armed conflicts between the locals and the Spaniards, who did not respect the rule of not entering the city space at will.[76]

Gallarate and Landriano's suggestion about the separate lodgings for Hungarians, on the other hand, does not seem to be propelled by the fear of cultural clashes. On the contrary, they claim that the cultural differences could be a reason why the hosts would not be able to offer a proper reception:

> …because they [=the burghers] would not know how to make their [=Hungarian] stews [perhaps an early form of goulash?] and to take care of them according to their custom, which would lead to the displeasure of both sides.[77]

The ignorance of Hungarian customs could have led to an unpleasant experience for the visitors and subsequently cast a shadow over the hospitality of the Milanese, and by extension, over the public image of the duchy. In general, the concept of premodern hospitality greatly differed from the modern understanding of the term. As Felicity Heal demonstrated, generous reception and entertaining of the guest did not stem from the mood or character of the particular host but from the overall atmosphere of social relations, in which generosity and largesse were closely tied with power and status. As a moral virtue, hospitality was one of the best ways to articulate the favourable reputation and thus the political position.[78]

Therefore, ill-prepared reception could have been offensive on every occasion, and even more so in times of princely nuptials when the stakes were particularly high with respect to foreign relations. It was thus crucial to not displease the other wedding party in any aspect, something Archbishop Arcimboldi also warns against when discussing the same wedding preparations, as we will see in the next chapter.[79] He suggests excluding from the bridal train politically inconvenient individuals, or to remind travel companions to wear long dresses since the Hungarians "greatly condemn these short clothes".[80] Thus awareness or ignorance of cultural differences could have been a key point in marital diplomacy, very much present before and during the wedding journeys that brought together people from various backgrounds.

To sum up, the logistical side of the wedding transfer shows the massive extent of the whole enterprise and the level of significance premodern society ascribed to getting it right. Even though its organisers tried to secure a smooth course of events, adversity in the form of poor weather, security threats, and shortage of supplies or accommodation standards resulted in the alteration of original plans. Responsibility for the logistical planning and carrying out of the journey did not lie with only one or both wedding parties or their subordinates but involved third-party states or cities that not only provided free-of-charge housing but also took charge of ameliorating road communications and assisted in finding solutions to the ad hoc route alterations.

The wedding travel possesses many distinctive features in comparison with traditional royal tours. First, since the journeys were a direct consequence of marital alliance between two royal houses, they had an inevitable international dimension, even more so, if the territory of a third-party state had to be crossed. This internationality is mirrored in the presence of cultural differences, but these are solely a smokescreen for a deeper issue. Each of the parties, involved in the execution of the voyage, wanted to boost its own social standing vis-à-vis a foreign dynasty or state, and that is why it aimed for the highest standards e.g. in means of travel or overall reception. The complaints about inferior accommodation are not a rebuttal but a confirmation of the high expectations connected with the event. Criticism that the other culture had shabby beds was not a form of xenophobia but affirmation of one's own identity and aspirations for a place in the contemporary social hierarchy, resulting in power, influence, and prestige. The intricate planning was thus a result of these diplomatic ambitions.

Second, the personal and dynastic motivations for highlighting the splendour of the event, for instance, to slot the bride's arrival into the major Christian holidays (taking place around winter time), added up to logistical complications. The motives that from a modern point of view seem non-essential often trumped practical considerations. And lastly, the chapter showed the level of social networking, fundamental for the bride's passage: for every material aspect it was necessary to connect tens or hundreds of people that did not participate in the event directly but they formed its physical backbone—by providing horses, wagons, chambers, or intelligence about roads, directions, or potential threat. Such a level of coordination and management is astonishing even today. All these aspects set the spousal journey apart from royal tours that circulated monarch's own domains, were seasonally repeated, and the future of dynasty was not so closely tied to their success.

Notes

1 Glenn Richardson, *The Field of Cloth of Gold* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 171.
2 Pius II, *Historia austrialis*, 1:151.

3 Ippolito Bellincini to Alfonso d'Este, Trent, 14 November 1565, ASE, Ambasciatori Germania 26, (not foliated).
4 To name just a few: Brian Paul Hindle, *Medieval Roads and Tracks*, 3rd ed. (Princes Risborough: Shire, 1998); Valerie Allen and Ruth Evans, eds., *Roadworks: Medieval Britain, Medieval Roads* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016); Norbert Ohler, *The Medieval Traveller*, New ed. (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010).
5 HHStA, HS W 555, "Registraturbuch König Maximilians I", fol. 1r onwards. Heidemarie Hochrinner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza. Versuch einer Biographie' (PhD diss., University of Graz, 1966), 37–38.
6 Hochrinner, 39.
7 Maribel Dietz, *Wandering Monks, Virgins, and Pilgrims: Ascetic Travel in the Mediterranean World, A.D. 300/800* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), 16.
8 Polidoro Castelli to Prince Francesco de' Medici, Dolce, 25 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, fol. 512.
9 TLA HS 5565, p. 22.
10 Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 34.
11 Polidoro Castelli to Bernardo Giusti, Trent, 17 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, fol. 379.
12 Dietz, *Wandering Monks*, 12–17.
13 Patrik Pastrnak, 'Flores Italiae. Talianské princezny v strednej Európe v neskorom stredoveku [Italian Princesses in the Late Medieval Central Europe]' (MA diss., Palacky University Olomouc, 2018), 31.
14 David Starkey, Andrea Clarke, and Susan Doran, eds., *Henry VIII: Man and Monarch* (London: British Library, 2009), 224. Although scholarship generally associates this chart with Anne of Cleves, Retha Warnicke rejects this interpretation. Warnicke, *The Marrying of Anne of Cleves*, 108.
15 Valerie Schutte, 'Anne of Cleves. Bound for England', in *Royal Journeys in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Anthony Musson and J.P.D. Cooper (London: Routledge, 2023), 99.
16 Hermann Wiesflecker, 'Maximilian I. und die habsburgisch-spanischen Heirats- und Bündnisverträge von 1495/96', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 1–2, no. 67 (1959): 33–34.
17 Pius II, *Historia austrialis*, 1:91–92.
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19 Aires Augusto Nascimento, Maria Filomena Andrade, and Maria Teresa Rebelo da Silva, eds., *Princesas de Portugal: contratos matrimoniais dos séculos XV e XVI*, Colecção Medievalia 5 (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1992), 84.
20 A safeconduct (from 4 October 1451) for the legation, asking free passage for their persons and belongings through all ports, passes, bridges, and towns. HHStA, FUK 624.
21 Pius II, *Commentaries*, 1:103, 111.
22 Pius II, *Commentaries*, 1:111.
23 Lanckman, *Diário de viagem*, 66–70.
24 Brassart, *Documents concernant le voyage de l'archiduchesse Marguerite*, 4; Molinet, *Chroniques* 5:67–68.
25 Wiesflecker, 'Maximilian I. und die habsburgisch-spanischen Heirats- und Bündnisverträge von 1495/96', 34; Gillian B. Fleming, *Juana I. Legitimacy and Conflict in Sixteenth-Century Castile* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 18.
26 Pietro Martire d'Anghiera, *Epistolario*, ed. José López de Toro, vol. 1 (Madrid: Gongora, 1953), 324–325.

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29 Charles Spencer, *The White Ship: Conquest, Anarchy and the Wrecking of Henry I's Dream* (London: William Collins, 2020).
30 Spieß, 'Unterwegs zu einem fremden Ehemann', 26.
31 Wiesflecker, 'Maximilian I. und die habsburgisch-spanischen Heirats- und Bündnisverträge von 1495/96', 33.
32 Tristano Calco, 'Nuptiae augustae, hoc est, Maximiliani imperatoris cum Blanca, Joannis Galeacii Mediolanensium ducis sorore', in *Thesaurus antiquitatum et historiarum Italiae, mari ligustico et Alpibus vicinae*, ed. Joannes Georgius Graevius, vol. 2 (Leiden: Petrus Vander, 1704), 530.
33 Calvi, *Bianca Maria Sforza-Visconti*, 35.
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39 Długosz, *Annales*, 177.
40 Chmel, *Die österreichische Geschichtsforscher*, 2:459.
41 Chmel, 2:462.
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44 Hochrinner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 36.
45 Sigismondo de' Rossi to Duke Cosimo I, Rovereto, 23 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, fol. 236.
46 Polidoro Castelli to Bernardo Giusti, Trent, 17 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, fol. 379.
47 *Beschreybung der Rayss gen Mantua*, TLA, Ferdinandea 31, pos. 27, fol. 3r.
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55 Cavriani to Duke Guglielmo, Bolzano, 23 January, 1561, ASMn, AG 200, fol. 166r.
56 Samman, 'The Progresses of Henry VIII, 1509–1529', 66–68; Cole, 'Monarchy in Motion: An Overview of Elizabethan Progresses', 36.
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58 Debris, *Tu felix Austria, nube*, 384.
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61 ASFi, MdP 518, fol. 298, 379.
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67 Bernardo Grazzini to Cosimo I, Innsbruck, 9 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, fol. 298.
68 Freyberg, 'Herzog Ferdinands', 288.
69 Freyberg, 287.
70 Bianca Maria to Anna Sforza, Mals, 15 December, 1493, ASMo, ASE, Carteggio con principi esteri 1583/9, (not foliated).
71 Bianca Maria to Anna Sforza, Innsbruck, 27 December, 1493, ASMo, ASE, Carteggio con principi esteri 1583/9, (not foliated).
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79 See more in the subchapter "Why so great? Rules and trespassing of them".
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3

'QUITE INAPPROPRIATE TO LET SUCH A LADY TRAVEL ALONE.' ENTOURAGE

In all bridal journeys, one particular detail almost always stands out: the greatness of the princesses' train. Why could brides and grooms not travel alone or with a small train instead of hundreds of people? Descriptions of their voyages are swarming with detailed lists of prominent figures who came the whole way with the spouse. Eleanor of Portugal was accompanied from Portugal to Italy by three thousand people[1] of whom 580 were noblemen on horseback.[2] Maximilian I's retinue to Burgundy consisted of 800–1200 people;[3] Bianca Maria Sforza's retinue was made up of 600 horses;[4] Joanna of Castile arrived on the shores of Flanders with an armada coming close to 15,500 people;[5] Elizabeth of Habsburg came to Poland in 1543 with 1,200 horses.[6]

These numbers might seem astonishingly high, and naturally, we must look at them with a due amount of scepticism. Even the entourages of queens from earlier times came to hundreds. Anna of Schweidnitz accompanying her husband Emperor Charles IV for the imperial coronation in Rome [1354] had a retinue of 1,000 people; Elizabeth of Pomerania, another of Charles IV's wives, travelled to her coronation in Rome with a 500-member retinue. At Charles IV's funeral, Elizabeth together with her daughter Catherine and daughter-in-law Joanna were attended by 100 ladies-in-waiting.[7] Even the first well-documented medieval bridal journey of the Frankish Princess Rigunth [584] was no exception as her train comprised several thousand people.[8] Given the source for these numbers—the chronicles that were often written years after the event and/or had a tendency to hyperbolise—it is understandable that historians have misgivings about them. Nonetheless, even if not precisely accurate, these numbers communicate a sense of massiveness, so the key to understand them is not to reject them as a rhetorical exaggeration—that could have been the case to some extent but not in the early modern times when we possess

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precise names of the participants—but to discern their proper value. Do they all refer to the number of noblemen? Or ladies-in-waiting?

Already in the account of Rigunth's journey [584], it is possible to see that the membership of her bridal train is not homogenous but consists of several components: servants, nobles, and soldiers. A similar structure is discernible in other medieval bridal journeys too, such as for Christine of Norway [1257/1258] who was led to Castile by distinguished Norsemen,[9] but only in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries do we possess sufficient data to reconstruct the three parts of the bridal entourage according to their functions:

a a prince(ss)'s court or household,[10] her/his closest company (in German *Hofstaat*), that was to fulfil her/his everyday needs and serve her personal representation;
b a wider noble entourage consisting of aristocratic persons and their retinues (in German *Brautgefolge* or *Brautzug)*, which was to represent the prince(ss)'s status and the status of her/his family on an international level;
c an armed escort which provided a safeguard for the whole travelling company.

However, this is just one way to divide the parts of the bridal train. According to the origin—or the place where a particular part of the retinue was recruited, we can distinguish at least four different segments:

a the first wedding party (departing)—bride(groom)'s entourage from fellow-countrymen, recruited from her/his natal court;
b the first wedding party—aristocrats' small entourages, recruited not from their own courts and domains;
c the second wedding party (receiving)—fetching embassy from the husband that was supposed to perform nuptials by proxy and accompany the bride;
d the third party (hosting)—escort (noblemen, soldiers) of the local hosts.

To complicate things even further, we can clearly see gender-related differences in structures of the prince(ss)'s household. Travelling brides had at their disposal a female section, the ladies' court (in German *Frauenzimmer*), whereas groom's train we can find offices that were closely tied specifically to the male body (barber) or leisure activities associated with males such as a man responsible for the preparation of guns or taking care of armour, as we will see later.

These parts of the train sometimes overlap or are mixed together, or more frequently sources relate to only one of them so that what is presented as a final tally of the prince(ss)'s train is in fact the sum of her/his court that does not include the military or noble escort. Aside from the different functions, these groups also varied in their duration: the military escort and the noble entourage were temporary, assembled only for the purpose of being a short-lived

bridal chaperon, whereas the bride(groom)'s court in many cases stayed with the prince(ss) after the arrival, although in case of princesses, the husbands tended to discharge the fellow-countrymen of their wives and to staff their households with their own liegemen. As we will see, such attempts resulted in many conflicts after the wedding.

Court studies have for some time examined the queen's household. Besides the prosopographic reconstructions of particular courts, their organisation, and way of functioning, the bigger questions have been posed as well: what was the place of these groups of people, especially females, in the wider field of politics? Did they possess any sort of influence? What were the boundaries imposed upon the ladies-in-waiting and what was the reaction if these rules were breached? The collection of essays edited by Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben brings all these questions into the foreground and shows that the ladies' court functioned as an informal centre of power, education, or marital politics.[11] The aspects foregrounded in this tome are also demonstrated in some studies in the collective volume, edited by Theresa Earenfight,[12] and Werner Paravicini and Jan Hirschbiegel's edited opus that looks into the relationship between a physical and personal *Frauenzimmer* (since in German, this term might refer to the female chambers as well), its development, rules, and functions in opposition to the male household.[13] It attributes a primary role to the ladies' court: "Already the High Middle Ages knew that the courtly splendour could be achieved only by the presence of women."[14] The courts and households of particular queens or duchesses, reconstructing their everyday life, structure, system of patronage, and consumption have been studied by several doctoral dissertations.[15] However, no study has ever looked at the structure of the bridal train and compared its origin, structure, and function on a wider corpus of cases. This chapter aims to offer such comparative analysis with respect to their material, social, and diplomatic purposes.

In the following subchapters two parts of the bridal train, namely the princess's court and the noble entourage, are addressed. Relying on various forms of narrative (travel reports and Carafa's instructional treatise) and archival documentation (e.g. ambassadorial reports, inventories, ordinances) these groups of people are scrutinised in terms of their structure, selection criteria, motivation, problems in recruiting and managing them. First, the composition of the bridal household and aristocratic entourage is examined. After a comparison of the nuptial with standard courts, and male and female bridal trains, attention is paid to an analysis of the household offices, their evolution in time, and regional variants. As it will be shown, this group of people was not solely personnel taking care of the prince(ss)'s needs. Whereas the household aimed to project the prestige of the bridal traveller, the aristocratic retinue was supposed to do so for the entire dynasty or state. Also, if governed properly, it was a powerful tool of representation and it also played an irreplaceable role in the incorporation of the bride into a new environment.

With the use of various sorts of archival documentation, the chapter then tries to find answers to—what were the qualifications or disqualifications for household members and how these people were selected. Although the rules (number of participants, their status, attire, and manners) for this expedition—either the one from the princess's homeland or the reception embassy by the husband—were vaguely accepted for centuries, it is only in the late fifteenth century that they are spelled out explicitly. Yet the dynastic and state interests were not the sole factors influencing their composition, as other reasons for including a particular personage were also at play. As a whole, this chapter aims to demonstrate the principles, purposes, and conflicts related to the persons following the prince(ss) to her/his new land, which all point to the fact that these individuals literally personified many issues connected with princely nuptials. Its analysis can thus help us to understand another layer to this type of event. However, we do not only possess the positive affirmation of the rules but also the negative ones—in the cases when the protocol is breached or contested, thus further proving the general expectations about this strange court.

Arrangement of the bridal train and especially of its nucleus, the household, was further complicated by another powerful element—the demands of the other wedding party who had also a say in this matter. As the clashes over the staffing and the post-wedding future demonstrate, the nuptial parties perceived the bridal trains as a prolongation of their dynastic interests and that is why they had clear power connotations. Courtiers, the princess's companions, were however not just pawns in the dynastic machinations but had their own agenda, plans, and strategies. Applying the revisionist perspective of court studies, the chapter thus tries to unravel the motivations and reasons of the courtiers. Overall judging it as an attractive prospect, the people joined the princess's train in order to elevate their own status, out of religious fervour or sheer curiosity. Management of the multilingual, multicultural, numerous, and sexually mixed group was not an easy task and inevitably, there were issues and conflicts. The last section of this chapter looks into the problems connected primarily with morality and the strategies to offset them.

In order to prevent misunderstanding, the terms *bridal* or *nuptial entourage, train, retinue,* or *cortège* apply to the description of the entire company of the bride. The terms *princess's court* or *household* denote only the first part of the bridal train whereas the *ladies' court* or *Frauenzimmer* refers to its female segment; the terms such as *noble/aristocratic entourage* or *retinue* stand for the second part of the nuptial train.

Who was in? Composition and structure of wedding entourage

"… and after Her Majesty, the highest stewardess and the entire chamber of ladies of Her Majesty proceeded…"[16] With these words, the anonymous author describes Johanna of Habsburg's arrival in Florence [1565]. How could a physical

unit—the chamber—follow somebody? Originally, the term *Frauenzimmer* or "chamber of ladies", conveying the impression of physical space, truly denoted the compartments where the king's consort and her female companions resided. Very soon, however, the meaning shifted to include the individuals inhabiting it as well, that is the female household.[17] Yet as Michail Bojcov suggests, the *Frauenzimmer* or the ladies' court was a group of people formed around the queen or princess rather than a mere collection of women at a princely court. He even goes further and discerns two meanings of this term in medieval sources: in a broader sense, a more frequent one, the *Frauenzimmer* corresponded to the entire queen's court *(Hofstaat)* and contained not only ladies-in-waiting and female servants—which was the narrow, less common sense—but also male servants, priests, chancellor, silver steward, tailors, squires, and other queen's court office-holders, craftsmen, or artists.[18] Conversely the king's court was not made up of male figures alone, and as Bojcov clearly demonstrated, women were not restricted to the queen's court nor were only ladies of rank presented: "The woman at court had not one face, but many—actually, as many as the man at court".[19] Therefore, according to him, the gender boundaries at court did not match the boundaries of *Frauenzimmer*.

Tempting as it sounds, the queen's (or empress's) household is usually denoted both in sources and modern scholarship as *Hofstaat*, whereas the term *Frauenzimmer* is reserved for the female part of it.[20] This terminology also applies to the court of travelling brides in our sample. Bojcov's comments however call our attention to the fact the princess' court was not a strictly feminine space. In other words, femininity was not a distinctive feature of the queen's household, distinguishing it from the king's one. More broadly speaking, the question of whether and in which form the queens possessed separate courts from kings has been elaborated by scholarship for some time.[21] For a long period of the Middle Ages, sources are not particularly clear whether queens held their own court or supervised the main (husband's) one, although sporadically one can find mentions of separate queen's court officials.[22] Only in cases where the queen's trajectory differed from her husband is it possible to see better the contours of her own household that was arguably financially and organisationally detached from the husband's one.[23] The situation is gradually clearer in the fifteenth century as the sources are more specific, but this period of time also marked the shift from an itinerant to a more centralised form of rule and the establishment of permanent residences for the Habsburg rulers, which automatically translated into a merging of the two courts.[24]

Given its very nature, the bridal journey is one of the few occasions when the court of the princess is clearly visible in the sources. If we compare the court lists of four Habsburg brides (Table 3.1), we can see its clear structure and hierarchy. Similar to a standard queen's court, this travelling court more or less mirrored the offices of the king's court the contours of which could be seen in the list of Maximilian II's household prior to his departure for Spain

TABLE 3.1 Comparison of the bridal courts of the four Habsburg princesses

Court office	*Mary of Hungary [1521]*[25]	*Catherine of Habsburg [1549]*[26]	*Eleanor of Habsburg [1561]*[27]	*Barbara of Habsburg [1565]*[28]
Hofmeister (lord steward)	1	1 (mayordomo)	1	1
Hofmeisterin (lady stewardess)	1	1+2 servants (mayordoma)	1	1
Obriste Kammererin (main chambermaid)	–	1+1 servant (cameriera mayor)	1	1
Frauenzimmer (ladies court)	9 Jungfrauen (noble ladies-in-waiting)	9 (6 donzelle + 3 stewardess's daughters/niece)	3 (Nachjungfrauen)	7 Jungfrauen
Kammerjungfrauen (chambermaids)	3	1 (una servente della camera)	4	–
Jungfrau dienern (servants of ladies)	3	1 (una servente delle donzelle)	1 (Kammerdienerin)	4
Wäschin (laundry lady)	1	1 (lauandara)	1 (Leibwäschin)	1 (Leibwäschin)
Jungfrauwärterin (keeper of the ladies)	–	–	1	1
Unterhofmeister (vice-steward)	1	–	1	1
Obrister Kammerer (main chamberlain)	–	1 (cameriere mayor)	–	1
Kammerdienern (chamber servants)	–	2 (servitori della camera, uscieri)—also ushers	1	2
Obrister Stäbel- and Küchenmeister (main kitchen and rod steward)	1 (just Stäbelmeister)	–	1	1
Fürschneider (carver)	1	1 (scalco)	1	2
Truchsess (steward)	6★	8 (gentiluomini chi servono alla bocca)	4	6
Schenk (cup-bearer)	1	–	2 (Mundschenk)	2 (Mundschenk)
Silberkammerer (silverware chamberlain)	5★	2+2 servants (credenzieri con garzoni)	1	1

(*Continued*)

TABLE 3.1 (Continued)

Court office	*Mary of Hungary [1521]*[25]	*Catherine of Habsburg [1549]*[26]	*Eleanor of Habsburg [1561]*[27]	*Barbara of Habsburg [1565]*[28]
Silberwäscher (silwerware cleaner)	2	–	1	1
Zinwäscher (zinc cleaner)	–	–	1	
Untersilber- und Lichtkammerer (vice silver and light chamberlain)	–	–	1	1
Edlknaben (pages)	4	6 (paggi)	4	–
Pfennigschreiber (accountant)	1	–	1 (Küchen- und Pfennigmeister)	1 (Küchen- und Pfennigmeister)
Leibartz (physician)	1	–	–	–
Gardarober (master of wardrobe)	1	–	–	–
Caplan (chaplain)	1	1 (cappellano)	2	–
Türhüter (door keeper/usher)	2	2 (servitori della camera uscieri)—also chamber servants	1 (Kammertürhüter)	1 (Kammertürhüter)
Portier (porter)	1	–	–	–
Furrier (quartermaster)	1	–	3 (1 Kammerfurier)	1 (Kammerfurier)
Kellner (cellaler)	1	–	3 (1 Zehrgadner)	1 (Zehrgadner)
Küchenschreiber (kitchen clerk/ accountant)	1	–	1 + 1 interpreter (Dolmetch)	1
Zuschroter (butcher)	1	–	1	1
Koch (cook)	5 (one of them specialising in cooking pâté)	1+servants (cuoco con garzoni)	4 + 4 servants	1

(*Continued*)

TABLE 3.1 (Continued)

Court office	*Mary of Hungary [1521]*[25]	*Catherine of Habsburg [1549]*[26]	*Eleanor of Habsburg [1561]*[27]	*Barbara of Habsburg [1565]*[28]
Frauenzimmer und Gesindküche (the kitchen staff for ladies and servants)	4	–	3 (Tafeldienern, table servant, and Küchenträger, kitchen courier)	–
Mundbäcker (baker)	–	–	1	–
Stallmeister (master of horses)	–	1	1 (Obrister Stallmeister)	–
Unterstallmeister (vice master of horses)	–	–	1	–
Stall (stable staff)	7+1 smith	6 (stafieri)	5+1 smith	–
Wagenknecht (coachman)	8	–	5 (Führleut and Anheber zu den Hoblwagen)	–
Lacayen (lackeys)	4	–	4	–
Sänftenmeister (supervisor of litters)	1	–	2 (Sänftenknecht)	–
Füttermeister (supervisor of animal fodder)	1	–	1 + 1 servant	–
Schneider (tailor)	1	1	1	–
Drummerschlager (drummer)	1	–	–	–
Pfeifer (piper)	1	–	–	–
Trompeter (trumpeter)	–	–	=1 of cellarers	
Hofwäschin (court laundry woman)	1	–	–	–
Tapezierer (tapestry-maker)	1	–	=chamber servants and quartermaster	–
Trabanten (servants)	–	–	9	–
TOTAL people	86	49+	89	41
TOTAL offices	36	17	40	24

(Table 3.2). The main difference was the office of marshal *(Hofmarschall)*. As the second highest office-holder, he could deputise for the steward *(Hofmeister)*, had judicial power over the other courtiers, and was responsible for handling the visits of foreign individuals, and in cooperation with the quartermaster, he took care of the prince's lodgings.[29] The absence of this position in the princess's court can be accounted for by the presence of the high stewardess *(Hofmeisterin)* whose responsibilities copied the chamberlain's. In addition, the stewardess was head of the ladies' court *(Frauenhof* or *Frauenzimmer)*, the innermost part of the princess's household, that consisted of unmarried noble ladies-in-waiting *(Jungfrauen)*, chamber ladies, and female servants. This group of women was a major difference between the household of the bride and groom (cf. Tables 3.1 and 3.2). Again, the bridal court slightly differed from a standard queen's court, for instance there were no attendants for nursing and raising children *(ayas)*.[30] Therefore it seems that the court positions were established in such a way that there was enough of a workforce to cover all the princess's representative and everyday needs, but equally, there was no superfluity that would lead to extensive financial burdens.

After the *Frauenzimmer*, the female nucleus, there was a group of officials in charge of the kitchen (cooks, kitchen staff, baker, butcher, and in one case, a cook specialising in the preparation of pâtés), the serving of meals (stewards, carvers, cup-bearers, pages), and taking care of silverware (chamberlain and vice-chamberlain of silverware and cleaners). Interestingly, in two cases it is possible to find a separate group of kitchen personnel waiting only on the *Frauenzimmer* and servants. The next cluster of courtiers, crucial for the logistics of the journey,[31] was responsible for taking care of the means of travel, that is, of horses (master and vice-master of horses, stable servants, lackeys, manager of horse fodder) and carriages (coachmen, managers of litters); the allocation of the lodgings was supervised by the quartermaster. Last, it was possible to find courtiers performing various other duties, such as managing finances (accountants), meeting the health and spiritual needs of the princess (physician, chaplains), or providing necessary parts of ceremonies—music (pipers, drummers, trumpeters) and attire (tailor, tapestry-maker). Maximilian II's [1548] court (Table 3.2) is organised according to the same pattern although one can find more gendered positions, such as barbier or preparer of guns, within it.

These main groups were present in all households in Tables 3.1 and 3.2; however, each of them varied in a number of both offices and office-holders. One would expect a greater diversification of positions over the course of time; nevertheless, this presumption is only partially true. Although we can see some extent of delegation of duties in the later cases as some officers started to possess deputies (vice steward, vice silver and light chamberlain, vice master of horse), generally the first court in Table 3.1, Mary of Habsburg's [1521], entailed roughly the same amount of assignments (36) as Eleanor of Habsburg's [1561] one forty years later. Even the total number of courtiers does not automatically grow over

TABLE 3.2 A list of Maximilian II's household[32]

Position	*Number*
Obrister Hofmeister (main steward)	1
Obrister Kammerer (main chamberlain)	1
Obrister Stallmeister (main master of horse)	1
Hof und Geld Marschalch (court and money marshal)	1
Kammerling (chamber servant, *cubicularius*)	1
Kuchen- und Stabellmeister (kitchen and rod steward)	1
Mundschenken (cup-bearers)	2
Truchsess (steward)	6
Ander vom Adel (other noblemen–without position)	13
Hofkaplan (court chaplain)	2
Obrister Silberkammerer (main silverware chamberlain)	1
Untersilberkammerer (vice silverware chamberlain)	1
Leibartz (physician)	1
Wundartz (surgeon)	1
Gardarober (master of wardrobe)	1
Leibbarbier (barber)	1
Hof Kücheneinkaufer (kitchen buyer)	2
Kammertürhüter (chamber usher)	1
Kammer- und Hoffurrier (quartermaster)	1
Trompeter (trumpeter)	6
Paucker (timpanist)	1
Trabanten Hauptman (chief of servants)	1
Trabanten (servants)	30
Controller und Pfeningmeister (controller and master of coin)	1
Silberdiener (silverware servant)	1
Koch (cook)	2
Unterkoch samt Küchenbuben (vice cook and kitchen boys)	3 or more
Zuschrotter (butcher)	1
Kellner (cellaler)	1
Tafeldiener (table servants)	2
Furier (quartermaster)	1
Leib- und Hofwäschin (laundry lady)	1
Rossbereiter (horse preparer)	1
Wagenfurier (coachman)	1
Fütterschreiber (fodder supervisor)	1
Harnaschmeister (master of armour)	1
Sattelknecht (saddle servant)	1
Hofschmidt (smith)	1
Stallknecht (stable servant)	4
Lacayen (lackeys)	4
Büchsenspanner (rifle preparer)	1
Kammertrabanten (chamber servants)	2
Eseltreiber (donkey driver)	4
TOTAL	111

time, there are ups and downs (86—111—49—89—41), but these fluctuations must be attributed to a flawed source basis[33] rather than to deliberate actions of the brides' paternal authorities—there is no reason why Ferdinand I, father to Maximilian, Catherine, Eleanor and Barbara, would send one child with a 41-person court and another double the size.

Not even the issue of status apparently influenced the total count; Mary's [1521] and Eleanor's [1561] households are numerically equivalent even though the former was about to marry a king, and the latter only a duke. The groom's status did not matter so much—after all, sources use the title "archduchess of Austria, born queen of Bohemia and Hungary" for Catherine, Eleanor, and Barbara. By the nature of their birth, they all possess the regal status, no matter what type of hierarchical ranks the husbands they were about to wed possessed. Alternatively, the variations might have been caused by the demands of the other wedding party, since, as we will see, there were negotiations about the structure of the household prior to the journey. Based on the examined sources, it is possible to conclude that the total number of the court stayed roughly the same, amounting to about ninety persons. The only change possible to trace is the slow expansion of court offices across several deputies. However, to prove this alternation, a much larger sample of bridal households from late medieval and early modern Europe would be needed. Judging from the material presented here, it seems that the final tally of attendants was sufficient to cover the everyday needs of the prince(ss) en route and there was no great need to expand it.

Discussing the structure and numbers of the household, we do not face only temporal but also regional challenges. All the examples debated above reflect the German practice that was appurtenant to Habsburg princesses marrying abroad. But what were the courts of the brides entering the House of Habsburg like? Joanna of Castile [1496] came with seventeen ladies-in-waiting, one of them being a senior noblewoman; Eleanor of Scotland [1448] was accompanied by seven damsels but nothing certain can be said about their hierarchy. Leaving Lisbon, Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452] was surrounded by three countesses, twenty-four selected ladies, three widows, and a few maids.[34] Comparing this generic description with the state of the contemporary Portuguese court, for instance, we can deduce the internal hierarchy of the princess's female companions—the ladies were probably unmarried *donzelas*, while widows and countesses can be identified with *donas*. There is no high stewardess but the *donas* served as *camareiras* (chamber ladies) who, unlike in the German practice, did not only take care of the queen's bedroom and wardrobe—those servants were called *covilheiras* (cubicularia)—but also wielded authority over *donzelas* and many times managed the queen's properties.[35] Stunningly, there are a relatively high number of ladies (ca. 30) that sharply contrasts with the contemporary or later cases (see Table 3.3). This could be explained by the high status of Eleanor's husband, soon-to-be Emperor Frederick, and by extension, of Eleanor

TABLE 3.3 Comparison of the Frauenzimmer and the entire court of several Habsburg brides

Bride	*Ladies-in-waiting/ Frauenzimmer (total)*	*Entire household*
Eleanor of Scotland (1449)[36]	7	?
Eleanor of Portugal (1452)[37]	30	50?
Bianca Maria Sforza (1493)[38]	4	?
Joanna of Castile (1496)[39]	17 (16 + 1 matron)	96
Margaret of Habsburg (1497)[40]	12	72
Mary of Hungary (1521)	17 (9 + 1 stewardess + 7 maids)	86
Catherine of Habsburg (1549)	17 (9 + 1 stewardess + 7 maids)	49
Eleanor of Habsburg (1561)	12 (3 + 1 stewardess + 1 keeper + 7 maids)	89
Barbara of Habsburg (1565)	15 (7 + 1 stewardess + 1 keeper + 6 maids)	41

herself. However, this rationale cannot justify why Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] came to her husband Maximilian, also aspiring to an imperial crown, in the company of only four ladies. More so, nothing certain can be said about the status or offices of these ladies, but Daniela Unterholzner argues that one of them, Violanta Cayma, probably performed the role of stewardess.[41]

Arguably the Milanese did not have such precise rules in arranging the princess's court, but the more likely explanation is that our sources are incomplete and Bianca's female company was much more numerous. There are hints for this claim: after five days of travelling, envoys and other prominent members of Bianca's entourage sent a letter to Lodovico informing him about the progress of the journey. Apart from many other issues, they address a sudden problem connected with the ladies' court, stating that "since *madonna* Michela could not bear the toil of the journey, it was necessary to leave her in the town of Gravedona where she is to wait for *madonna* Griseida" with whom she would return to Milan. Following this statement, they go on to say that Bianca strongly recommends inviting Michela to her mother's court and wishes her post to be taken up by Catelina da la Seda and one other lady from her *donne discrete*.[42] Michela's replacement was hardly going to be someone not already physically present in the entourage—it would take additional time and financial costs to dispatch somebody from Milan to catch up with the bridal train. None of the ladies—Griseida, Michela, Catelina—were the four ladies. Their existence, together with an anonymous group of *donne discrete* show that the ladies' court was more populous than one might think.

That being the case, Bianca's female circle would resemble the German model consisting of older noblewomen, unmarried ladies-in-waiting, chambermaids, and servants, a structure similar to what we have seen in the

Habsburg cases and in the case of Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452]. After all, the standard (post-wedding) court of Bianca's mother, Bona of Savoy, copied this pattern precisely, consisting of four female companions *(compagne)*, twelve ladies *(donzele)* and several chambermaids, along with many other male officers.[43] The same composition of the ladies' court is documented for another Italian bride Bona Sforza, Bianca's niece, travelling to Poland twenty-five years after her nuptials [1518].[44] But also in Bona's case, there were discussions prior to departure about the number of women accompanying the princess. Isabella of Aragon, Bona's mother (her father Gian Galeazzo was deceased), picked two older noblewomen and six younger ladies for the princess's train but Polish ambassadors tried to reduce the number of older noblewomen to one, claiming a lack of financial resources for transporting those ladies safely back home. Eventually, the ambassadors' attempts fell short as Isabella stood her ground, saying that "nothing is more indecorous than the wife of such a great king traveling without an appropriate retinue"; even Emperor Maximilian I, an orchestrator of the wedding, intervened, supporting Isabella's assertion that "Lady Bona ought to have a retinue appropriate for a queen".[45]

Evidently, the necessity of a numerous and prestigious bridal retinue of the princess, in this case, its female part was an accepted notion throughout the European royal families, although not everywhere embedded so firmly or with the identical structure. In the end, the Polish envoys argued with the composition of the entourage on the grounds of limited budget, not a different regional custom. All things considered, we can presume that the foreign bridal courts and their female segments were also numerous and stratified, as it was commonly deemed appropriate long before 1450. Konrad von Megenberg, for instance, writing around the mid-fourteenth century, classifies the queen's damsels into *ancillae maiores*, consisting of the court dames and noble ladies, and *ancillae minores*, involving female cooks, chamber maids, and other servants.[46]

Let us now look more closely at the composition of the *Frauenzimmer* of the Habsburg brides which, as we have seen, shares many common features with the non-German ladies' courts. The administrative head of the *Frauenzimmer* was a stewardess *(magistra curiae, Hofmeisterin, mayordoma)*. Usually this office was held by a senior noblewoman, a countess, or baroness;[47] either a widow (such as in the case of Eleanor of Habsburg, 1561) or the wife of the princess's steward (Bianca Maria Sforza, 1493, Mary of Hungary, 1521). Her main duty was the administration of the daily routine within the ladies' court and she was responsible for complying with the court ordinances and placating potential conflicts. In addition, she helped to coordinate contact with the outer world, that is, she and the princess decided which persons were allowed to make visits to the *Frauenzimmer* or with whom the ladies could be in touch by correspondence.[48] In terms of implementing the court rules and oversight, the stewardess was helped by the keeper of ladies *(Jungfrauwärterin* or *Fräuleinhofmeisterin)*[49] but the authority of the latter was limited to the noble ladies-in-waiting.

The stewardess, on the other hand, was partially (subordinated to the steward) in charge of the princess' entire household and as a person with direct access to the princess, she played an important role during many ceremonial occasions, for instance, during audiences, baptism, and coronations.[50] The superior position of the stewardess is also clearly projected throughout the course of the bridal journey as we can see her dining with the princess and travelling with her in the same coach.[51]

Besides the main stewardess and the unmarried maidens, there were chamber maids *(Kammerjungfrauen, puellae cubiculariae)* who were responsible for the princess's wardrobe, that means taking care of various kinds of garments and jewels, helping the princess with dressing, and serving her in various everyday needs, such as waiting at the table.[52] As persons in the closest proximity to the princess, they even slept in the same bedroom and maintained candlelight to keep an eye on her. Helene Kottanner, prominent female personage at the court of Elizabeth of Luxembourg (1409–1442) in her memoirs records an episode when one of the queen's two chambermaids caused fire by knocking over the candle.[53] The noble and unmarried maidens were not involved in a direct service to the princess, their main role was representation—they were supposed to be her company during various social events, either as passive (audiences, church services, ceremonial entries) or active participants (dances, ballets).[54] Undoubtedly, it is this role, along with their noble origin, that keeps them in the spotlight of the sources. Lastly, there was female personnel, performing the lowest-status menial jobs, such as laundry or kitchen work.

The second major part of the bridal train consisted of nobles that joined the princess's company strictly for the period of the journey and wedding. However, the princess's company usually underwent drastic changes in the months following the wedding, so there is a fine line between them and office-holders and servants who served at the bridal court likewise for a limited time. Nonetheless, in contrast to the latter, the noble-entourage members did not hold any position in the household, thus not receiving any salary pertaining to the job.

Generally, the aristocratic entourage was more an assemblage of many cortèges than one homogenous entity, as each nobleman had at their disposal a small group of servants taking care of his needs. From a detailed list of Eleanor of Habsburg's [1561] retinue (Table 3.4), we can see that these small nuclei varied according to the person's rank: counts *(Graf)* and barons *(Freiherr)* travelled with a larger number of horses than knights *(Ritter)* or lesser noblemen. Although the number of horses does not necessarily correspond to the number of people involved as some servants could have travelled on wagons or by foot, it still indicates a greater cortège for each individual aristocrat.

Another important difference between the bridal household and the aristocratic retinue was the duration of their service, or even better, their presence in the train. Although many companions from the noble entourage did accompany the prince(ss) for the entire course of the journey, it was much looser than

TABLE 3.4 The noble entourage of Eleanor of Habsburg (1561)[55]

Name	*Number of horses*
Herr Albig, Graf zu Sultz	6
Herr Phillips, Graf zu Liechtenstain	6
Herr Cristoff, Freyherr zu Wolkenstain	5
Herr Casper, Freyherr zu Wolkenstain	5
Herr Cristoff, Freyherr zu Welsperg	5
Herr Georg, Freyherr zu Fürmian	5
Herr Georg, Freyherr zu Spaur	5
Herr Sigmundt von Tun	5 and one donkey
Herr Pangraz Kuen, Ritter	4
Herr Jacob Trapp, Ritter	4
Herr Jacob von Payrsperg, Ritter	4
Herr Reinprecht Hendl, Ritter	4
Doctor Mathias Alber, Orator und sein Sun Mathias Philips Albert	both 5
Martin von Payrsperg	3
Hanns Botsch	3
Sebastian Fueger	3
Melchior Fueger Zeugmaister	3
Beernhardt Künigl	5
Sigmund von Tun der Junger	3
Victor von Tun	3
Hanns Veit von Annenberg	3
Carl Kuen Haubtman auf dem Nons?	3
Adam von Tereng	4
Franz von Trautmanstorf	3
Georg Fueger der Junger	3
Caspar Payr zu Caldis?	3
Ludwig von Tagiss?	4
Hanns Sinkhmoser zu Jufal?	3
Sigmund Händl	3
Hanns Langermantl	3
Rudolpf von Vels	2
Wolf Cristoff von Elrichingen?	2
Erasim? von Andrian?	1
Balthasar Frelich	2
Benedict Sebenstreit	2
Babtista Leopardt	2
Rudolff Weiche?	2

the household and people might come and go—they could follow the train from the prince(ss)'s departing point and leave at some point or join at later stages. This was not only the case for the fetching embassy, which we have already mentioned, or the welcoming delegations, at which we will have a look in Chapters 4 and 5. On the contrary, there could be freelancing travelling

companions too: for instance, Christoph Ungnad von Weißenwolf, a Styrian knight, who happened to be in Lisbon during the arrival of the embassy of fellow countrymen and joined them to accompany Eleanor of Portugal to Italy [1451/1452].[56] Another example is Doctor Cyriacus Lutz from Ingolstadt, who joined the train of Margaret of Austria in Milan [1598/1599] because he wanted to travel *mit Gelegenhait* (conveniently) to Spain and from thence to Jerusalem. However, none of his plans materialised and the trip cost him his life—on the sea, he got fever and died in Marseille.[57]

Why so great? Rules and trespassing of them

As we have seen, the prince(ss)'s travelling court was very similar to standard royal courts. Why did the brides possess a fully equipped household when, as we will see later on, this group was usually significantly altered after the wedding? By the same token, why was there a need for this massive retinue of noble individuals? Why could not the wedding entourage amount to around 200 hundred people, as it was usual for royal tours?[58] Or even a smaller number, up to 50 people, which Emperor Charles V had at his disposal when visiting France?[59] In other words, why was just a small personnel and a due safety guard not sufficient for accompanying the bridal traveller? And why did the household contain people that were soon afterwards sent home?

The rules for the composition of the bridal entourage, albeit still rudimentary, can be found in the letters between the Milanese state secretary Bartolomeo Calco and Lodovico il Moro, then *de facto* ruler of Milan. This communication concerned Bianca Maria's entourage, unfortunately not for her wedding with Maximilian I but for an unrealised wedding with John Corvinus [1488], the illegitimate son of King Matthias of Hungary. Due to Matthias's death and other political shifts, this transfer never took place, but these talks give us an intriguing glimpse into the preparatory actions of the princess's court.

The selection of ladies-in-waiting and household members that were to travel and stay with Bianca in Hungary was left at the discretion of Bona of Savoy, Bianca's mother.[60] However, discussing the composition of the entire entourage, two of Lodovico's counsellors and the state secretary Calco advised for other persons to be added, namely a *gentil donna*, a noble lady, who would accompany Bianca and return back to Milan. In their view, it would be inappropriate *(pocho condescente et honorevole)* for her status to travel only with those ladies who would stay with her.[61] That is why the counsellors advise sending at least four of these *matrone* and they even give precise tips about who should fill these posts. Ultimately, however, the final decision rested with Lodovico. In most cases, these would be wives of prominent aristocrats, some of whom were also to travel with the princess. It was crucial that the princess would travel with the proper-sized group of women—we have seen above how the sudden indisposition of *madama* Michela during Bianca Maria's stay in Gravedona

caused deliberations about finding a replacement. Similar manoeuvres are documented for Eleanor of Scotland [1448] but this time it was her groom's envoys looking for the ad hoc substitution.[62]

A far more intricate debate arose between Calco and other state representatives concerning the rest of the entourage. The first draft of this retinue was authorised by Lodovico il Moro and it contained a list of persons together with an instruction for Calco to write to all of the selected members of the retinue to be prepared to depart on the chosen date.[63] Nevertheless, the entourage continued to be further reviewed as Calco examined the Lodovico-approved list with the Milanese archbishop, Guidantonio Arcimboldi.[64] According to the prelate, the list was well conceived, because, allegedly, as a person quite aware of Hungarian affairs,[65]

> he understood that the Royal Majesty [=the King of Hungary] would strive to send a delegation so prestigious that no other ruler had ever sent, both in terms of the number of people, the overall pomp and ornaments.[66]

As a response to the endeavours of the other wedding party, it is necessary—as Arcimboldi urges—for the Milanese to answer with the same amount of splendour. The archbishop then examined closely the proposed list and he suggested excluding some individuals due to their alleged lack of resources to meet the expectations on pomp, splendour, or behaviour standards. Another issue was the personal retinues of nobles. Arcimboldi left the decision at Lodovico il Moro—whether he would let nobles pick their company by themselves or would appoint to every noble a specific cortège. However, the total number of persons in Bianca's retinue should involve at least six hundred people.[67]

This turns our attention to the mathematics of the retinue. Arcimboldi's mention of the six hundred threshold marks a solitary attempt to spell out the contemporary expectations regarding the magnitude of the bridal train. Why did Archbishop Arcimboldi assert that the bridal train was supposed to amount to at least six hundred? Possibly this idea could have stemmed from previous experience as there is every reason to assume that the retinue of Bona of Savoy, Bianca Maria's mother, also involved several hundred people.[68] Most likely, however, Arcimboldi, as a skilled diplomat, was referring to the numbers involved in the last Hungarian royal wedding, that of Matthias Corvinus and Beatrice of Aragon in 1476. To fetch Beatrice in Naples, the king of Hungary sent a committee amounting to 529 horses,[69] a number very close to the one suggested by the Milanese archbishop two decades later on.

Yet Beatrice's own company added up to merely half (350 Neapolitans), so one might ask why—if the Milanese found themselves in the same situation as the Neapolitans before—the archbishop did not think of this number and instead follow the standards of the groom's party? Aside from a traditional rivalry among the Italian states which could have been sufficient grounds to

account for this, one might think of another, more sophisticated reason. If based on the anticipation that the Hungarians would behave similarly as in 1476 and would send again a company amounting to six hundred, the archbishop's suggestion aims to match this number, and by extension, to match the splendour and magnificence of the other wedding party. Such course of thinking would be in line with other actions of the Milanese as they left no stone unturned in obtaining information about the king of Hungary's intentions so they could act accordingly. It was precisely Arcimboldi and another envoy, Gianantonio Olive, who travelled to Hungary in order to learn not only about the journey's logistics, festivities planned in Hungary, and Bianca Maria's future status but should also find out details about the Hungarian embassy in terms of its numbers, as well as the names and ranks of the individuals involved.[70]

In the end, Bianca did not get a chance to travel to Hungary and thus, we do not know to what extent the archbishop's propositions would have materialised. For her wedding with Maximilian I [1493/1494] we do not possess any sources pertaining to the organisation of the entourage, curiously enough though, when leaving Milan to reach her husband, Bianca Maria's bridal train amounted to six hundred horses—yet this time it became a source of frustration (mostly because of financial reasons) for Maximilian's officials as a much lower number had been expected.[71] Is this a coincidence or proof that Arcimboldi's advice was in fact followed, only on a different occasion? There are several hints that the preparatory steps for the unrealised journey in 1488 were recycled in 1493, for instance, some aristocrats who accompanied Bianca to the imperial court had also been designed to do so in the Hungarian transfer.[72] The same could have been the case for the size of the entourage but there is also a possibility that Arcimboldi's suggestion was an expression of contemporary trends, putting emphasis on the massive size of the noble entourage. After all, Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452] was accompanied by a very similar number of noblemen (580).[73] Be that as it may, this is the first instance articulating an appropriate number for the nuptial train.

For Arcimboldi, the size of the entourage is a key element—the other one being the attire—in communicating the pomp and splendour of their own country; failing to reach a certain level of representation is according to him a reason to exclude some noblemen from participation in the bridal escort. To understand the logic behind this rule of magnificence we must look at instances when it was contested or defied by one wedding party.

Such was the case of Frederick III and Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452]. Despite the high level of expectation from the Portuguese side that a marriage to the soon-to-be emperor would be a very prestigious event, which might catapult the status of the entire dynasty and monarchy, the Habsburg groom was sending very mixed signals. To fetch his upcoming wife he sent to Portugal two low-status priests, one being his personal confessor and another

a chaplain, with only a handful of servants, so that the entire delegation came to only five horses. One of the clerics, Nicolas Lanckman, left us a very colourful description of their arduous expedition across Europe. Before reaching the Portuguese borders, the embassy was captured and robbed of all their money and clothes by a group of brigands:

> On the mountain of Rabanel (?) raiders came with three hundred horsemen and foot soldiers, and with a great booty of men and animals. At first they attacked the pilgrims, hurting and capturing all who were in the company of the pilgrims and deprived the envoys of their bigger robes, money, and one horse. Then, their captain, a certain knight, arrived and they [= the envoys], fear-strickened, laid down before him, kissed his feet, kneelt before him and venerated him. They showed him safe-conduct letters from the princes, kings, and captains, but he did not care about this at all. Again, raising their hands to the sky, they asked for mercy out of Christian love, saints James and George, and out of regard for the most serene king of the Romans [= Frederick III], presenting his letter of free passage. The captain, moved by compassion, took the letter of the lord emperor with due respect and ordered to set them [= the envoys] free, but to not hand them back any of their stuff.[74]

Even with a financial sum borrowed from the Medici bank in Santiago de Compostella, the Germans were unable to acquire an appearance befitting to imperial envoys, so, as soon as they put their feet on Portuguese soil, they were seized by local authorities.[75] After their release, their journey continued but Lanckman omits that prior to their arrival in Lisbon, the envoys stopped in Coimbra where the local bishop, seeing their wretchedness, gave orders to buy fine robes at his own expenses and dress them in them, and to give them money, beds, and servants. According to the chronicler Rui de Pina, who recorded this episode, the bishop did so because "they did not come in mien and attire appropriate to the ambassadors of such a lord and [to those] who should celebrate such a prominent marriage".[76] Neither the king of Portugal was happy about the Emperor's deputies: on the outside he paid them respect and "received them with joy"[77] but other reports say that he was offended by the smallness and quality of the German embassy, consisting of two priests, as he considered it something "low and insulting".[78] Not even the oration the envoy, Jacob Motz, addressed to the king, helped to correct the bad impression:

> The most serene emperor [= Frederick] sent priests because every divine work, either in the Old or New Testament, is done in this way. That is why during the incarnation it is prophetically said: "I am sending my angel before you," that is, a priest. And again: "He will go before him in the spirit and virtue of Elijah." […] The most serene king of the Romans

> [= Frederick] wanted to abide by the norms and rules of the prophets and the evangelists, and that is why he sent these two men […][79]

No matter how biblically Motz wanted to spin Frederick's actions, even Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, the future pope Pius II, who was at that time in Frederick's service, criticises the choice of embassy, calling the two priests "hardly to be trusted".[80] Ultimately this fiasco did not lead to the dissolving of the marriage but certainly contributed to Frederick's aura of being a scrooge,[81] not only in comparison with the lavish wedding festivities in Lisbon and subsequently Eleanor's Portuguese entourage but also with the other contemporary monarchs sending convoys of hundreds to fetch their brides, as we have seen above. Apparently, holding already the highest title among European rulers, Frederick had little to lose in prioritising financial costs over the construction of international reputation, which is the stance that prevailed in Habsburg marital plans several times. The double weddings from 1495/1496 to 1515/1521 effectively neutralised the necessity of paying the dowry,[82] and what is more, the bridal journeys of Joanna of Castile and Margaret of Habsburg [1496/1497] were solely in the hands of the Spanish. Maximilian I was even explicitly asked by his estates not to spend any more funds on the preparation of the entourage or the nuptials in general since the other wedding party would take care of everything.[83]

Yet it would be misleading to think that the Habsburgs did not recognise the importance of the magnificent bridal entourages when the political situation demanded it. Travelling to wed Mary of Burgundy [1477], whose domains were under serious threat from the king of France, Maximilian I was able to cobble together a massive noble entourage, involving up to 1,200 people. There were delegations from imperial princes, namely the electors of Mainz, Trier, Brandenburg, the margrave of Baden, the dukes of Jülich and Saxony, the bishop of Metz, landgrave of Hessen, and many other lords and knights.[84] Even though many of these German princes were convinced to participate only by the high price which they were paid by the Burgundian side, Maximilian's huge train was met with cheery salutes in the cities pertaining to Mary's hereditary lands, lifting their spirit in the fight against the French.[85] Also on other occasions the Habsburg princes and princesses travelled to their spouses with massive retinues: Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543] came to Poland with 1,200 horses[86] and her brother Maximilian II set off to Spain with 600 horses.[87]

The massive noble entourage is a crucial feature in understanding what the bridal journey really meant for premodern society. The splendour of the princess/prince's retinue, manifested by the high number and status of their companions, was momentous for the construction of the status of the princess/prince and by extension their entire house. Lacking the regular bureaucratic apparatus of officials and relying on more personalised communication, premodern rulers used various tokens of social estimation to negotiate their own

position when encountering foreign power holders.[88] Princely weddings were a unique chance for such encounters and each wedding party did not miss any chance to exhibit its sumptuousness, that is, its high social rank. As Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger puts it, premodern social hierarchy was a fiction that needed to be realised through visual signs.[89] The same could be said for monarchical power: rulers for the entire medieval period expressed their authority and majesty through the extravagant display of wealth,[90] which was only inflated with the arrival of the Renaissance theory of magnificence.[91] The aristocratic entourage was one component in the bridal journey's arsenal of splendour and prestige.

Botched and mishandled, Frederick III's delegation shows that not only the number but also the social standing of the envoys was important, as the king of Portugal was frankly insulted by the "mission of priests". In general, this case is quite unique, as bridal trains usually strove to include the most prominent members possible. The enumeration of distinguished personages involved in the escorting of the bride or groom culminated in the final joyous entry. From

FIGURE 3.1 The life of the sixth-century queen Theodolinda is celebrated in magnificent frescoes in the Monza cathedral near Milan. The splendour of the queen's wedding journey is constructed through her numerous and diverse entourage. Zavattari workshop, Stories of Theodolinda, scene 15, Arrival in Lombardy, mural paiting, ca 1445. Chapel of Theodolinda, Monza Cathedral. With the kind permission of © Museo e Tesoro del Duomo di Monza/foto Piero Pozzi.

the sixteenth century onwards festival books meticulously specify each one of them, describing their attire, trimming, and armour. An occasional print *Hochzeitlicher Einzug der Jungern Königin zu Cracau*, for instance, across eleven pages spells out in detail order of the entry wedding procession of Elizabeth of Habsburg into Cracow [1543]—bishop, dukes, landlords, their attire, household servants, the number of horses, and various types of soldiers and horsemen. Its purpose was not only to communicate the order and hierarchy of the ceremonious march but more importantly to manifest the density and prestige of its participants that directly translated into the splendour of the royal wedding and the dynasties united in it.

The discussions concerning the composition of Bianca Maria's retinue [1488] indicate what sort of individuals were eligible for this role. According to Archbishop Arcimboldi they were expected to meet high standards of conduct and representation, that is persons from the highest echelons of society that did not lack appropriate garments or certain behavioural manners. Arcimboldi suggests to cross out from the list of the planned entourage everybody who cannot satisfy these criteria:

> […] it seemed to him [=the archbishop] that some people, especially the prelates, should be dismissed, some for not having the ability and means to bear themselves as the duty *(bisogno)* requires, and others for not having the convenient [outer] appearance to which is paid great attention and which is highly esteemed in that country [=Hungary, Bianca's destination].[92]

Two priests, representing Frederick III in Lisbon, as persons from his intimate circle would probably have had little difficulty in conforming to Arcimboldi's norm, yet their low status would definitely be felt to be something offensive. If such low-ranking clergymen were to be found in the bridal train, they usually occupied the position of the princess's confessors or orators but not as leading members of the noble entourage. Ecclesiastical figures can be found in the noble retinues, but they maintained the ranks of bishop, archbishop, or cardinal, that were usually linked with some secular office as well. Maximilian I [1477] travelled with the bishop of Metz, Mainz, and Trier, the last two also being imperial electors; Bianca Maria Sforza [1493/1494] was accompanied by the archbishop of Milan and the bishop of Chur; Philibert of Savoy dispatched Aymon di Montfalcon, a bishop of Lausanne, to fetch Margaret of Habsburg [1501];[93] on his way to Spain, Maximilian II [1548] was assisted by the Christoforo Madruzzo, Cardinal and Prince-bishop of Trent;[94] many cardinals also (Carlo Borromeo, Ludovico Madruzzo, Luigi d'Este, and others) took part in the journeys of Eleanor [1561], Barbara and Joanna of Habsburg [1565], some as representatives of the wedding families, some as local lords or papal envoys.[95] The pope, naturally, did not order the cardinals to join the travelling company

without any reason: the duke of Florence, for instance, explicitly asked the pontiff to command Cardinal Borromeo to participate in the bridal train, on account of his family ties.[96] Their high social rank promoted the importance of the whole enterprise and to some extent mirrored the high status of the princess or prince. That is why Frederick III's legation, absolutely disproportionate to the imperial rank, caused such confusion.

The attendance of distinguished persons could highlight the prominence of the journey and wedding but at the same time, it automatically entailed higher costs pertaining to the required hospitality, for instance, sending a special troop welcoming those individuals, arranging luxurious lodging, presenting them with precious gifts, etc. That is probably why Guglielmo, duke of Mantua, did not want to invite any other princes or dukes for his wedding with Eleanor of Habsburg [1561]. The duke's wish had a direct impact on the structure of Eleanor's entourage as it was originally planned that she would be escorted by her brother, Archduke Charles, and reportedly it caused great bewilderment at the Viennese court:

> All the greatest lords of the court and mainly the first councillors of the Holy Imperial Majesty say publicly and everywhere that they are astounded that Your Excellency [=Guglielmo] had ordered to say that You do not want most serene Duke Charles, brother of the most serene bride, such a high lord, at Your nuptials. It seems to them that it is not appropriate *(lecito)* to refuse the prince greater than You are, if he wants to accompany the sister.[97]

From the point of view of the main court officials and councillors, Guglielmo's refusal of the archduke, who stood above him in the social hierarchy, was inexcusable. This points to the fact that there was a common notion of correct behaviour, or more precisely, protocol in these situations, and its transgression was not taken lightly and could have had serious repercussions on the prince's image.

Realising the potential harm to his reputation, Guglielmo tried to set things right and instructed his ambassador Cavriani to rationalise his aversion to the prominent guests by claiming that he was not planning great pageantry or sumptuous nuptials at the time of the originally scheduled wedding date, but that now he would like to invite the neighbouring Italian princes as well to welcome the archduke and honour so as in every respect.[98] Cavriani personally conveyed his words to Emperor Ferdinand but apparently, it did not make any difference, as the emperor repeated that Guglielmo had made known his wishes and after all, it was already too late for Charles to prepare as Eleanor was scheduled to depart in two weeks.[99] A similar answer was given by the archduke himself, who, after having been invited by Cavriani, responded that he would be happy to come, but that now it was too late.[100]

Guglielmo addressed the issue one more time, instructing Cavriani to reiterate all the reasons why the invitation for Archduke Charles was mishandled, and again blaming the rescheduling of the wedding.[101] But all the same, the prominent guest from Austria did not turn up. Be the duke of Mantua's intentions genuine or not, his communication caused much confusion and dissatisfaction, not only in the imperial court but also in adjacent Venice, which indicated she would not be sending the usual delegation to the nuptials since the duke of Mantua allegedly did not want the great powers present.[102] Also the Habsburgs probably considered this an insult since their excuses of being too late for the archduke to arrive do not hold up in comparison with the other instances, e.g. in the above-mentioned journey of Joanna of Habsburg to Florence when her cousin Prince Ferdinand of Bavaria caught up with the main bridal train just before the final destination.[103]

Generally, the refusal of a wedding invitation was deemed a grave offence to the organiser and fellow guests. Blaming the bad stars, Vladislaus II, King of Bohemia, turned down the invitation to her sister's wedding in Landshut in 1475. The real reason was not Vladislaus's lack of resources, which were reportedly given to him by his father. Reluctant to compromise his family's religious image, the king of Bohemia probably did want to bring along his Utraquist, that is non-Catholic Bohemian subjects—this is why the pope opposed the invitation too.[104] Regardless of Vladislaus's real motivation, his absence gravely angered his kinsmen and delighted the opponents. Had he been there, Vladislaus would have "added a special decorum *(decus)* to his sister's nuptial".[105] Weddings and, by extension, wedding journeys were a rare opportunity to project the magnificence and failing to do so generated a well-deserved backlash.

Who could be the princess's companion?

Aside from high status as an element highlighting the prominence of the wedding parties and the event itself, there could have been other aspects qualifying somebody as a member of the noble entourage. First, there were blood ties: the brides and grooms were often accompanied by some of their closer or distant kinsmen, sometimes these personages were put in charge of the entire bridal train. The head of Eleanor of Portugal's entourage was Afonso of Braganza, marquis of Valença, her paternal uncle,[106] although originally her brother Prince Fernando was destined to escort her since he wanted to visit their uncle, King Alfonso of Naples.[107] But even Afonso was given the title of marquis of Valença only thirteen days before the departure and since it was the first time this sort of noble position was bestowed on somebody,[108] it seems that the king aimed to intentionally promote the rank of the leader of the expedition. Ferdinand of Tyrol accompanied his sister Catherine to Mantua [1549][109] and then again to Cracow [1553].[110] Joanna of Habsburg in 1565 was supposed to be joined by her cousin Prince Ferdinand of Bavaria but since the decision

about his involvement was made at short notice, he missed the departure of the main bridal train from Innsbruck and travelled with a week's delay after the princess.[111]

Either way, it was usually a male family member, either a brother, cousin, or uncle, only rarely the father. For instance, Duke Alfonso d'Este took part in the entire procession of his daughter Isabella from Ferrara to Mantua in 1490.[112] This case, featuring not only Alfonso but also the bride's entire family, was definitely caused by the close geographical distance between the two cities. By the same token, it was usually senior female relatives, such as aunts, who took part in the wedding train. Only seldom, mothers, grandmothers or sisters did so: Eleanor of Aquitaine accompanied both her daughter-in-law, Berengaria of Navarre, as well as her granddaughter Blanche of Castile in 1191 and 1200 respectively.[113] Maria of Bavaria (1551–1608), Archduchess of Styria, accompanied her daughters Anne [1592], Margaret [1598], and Constance [1605] all the way to Spain and Poland respectively, and only her premature death hindered her to conduct also Maria Magdalene to Florence in 1608 too.[114] Constance [1605] travelled also in company of her elder sister Maria Christina.[115] Eleanor of Aquitaine and Maria of Bavaria's involvement definitely has to be attributed to their strong personalities, but on the other hand, their examples show us that there was—unlike for the female siblings—no protocol ban for parents to accompany their children right to the very end of their journeys.

For courtiers, either in the household or aristocratic retinue, there were also other traits making them eligible than their social standing. Previous experience in the job was generally a good qualification for the post, for example, many stewardesses served for a long time several generations of one princely family. For instance, Else Pellendorffer was a stewardess to Eleanor of Portugal and then also to her daughter Kunigunde.[116] Vratislav of Pernštejn, who accompanied Maximilian II to Spain [1548] also travelled with Catherine to Poland [1553], and as Maximilian's representative, took part in Philip II's wedding journey to England [1554] and Philip II's nuptial celebrations with Elizabeth of Valois [1560].[117] Other skills were also valuable—Maximilian II recommends Ursula, widow of the count of Nagarollo, as a stewardess for his sister Catherine, soon to be married off to Mantua [1549]. Ursula, Maximilian writes, is a woman of honourable lineage, character, and reason, and on top of that she speaks sufficient Italian and German, so "she can carry out the famous office of *Hofmeisterin* in the way that would honourably and profitably suit the duke of Mantua and my sister".[118] Naturally, Maximilian's reference did not come out of nowhere, he was approached by Ursula in Trent on his own bridal expedition to Spain [1548]. Managing the ladies' court was a lucrative job for every noblewoman as it entailed a good social standing, a regular financial income, and valuable social contacts, but above all, the access to the princess.

Another important factor qualifying somebody to be the travelling companion was the princess or prince's trust: grooms and brides could have specifically

wished some trustworthy and familiar persons to join them on the journey. One example can be found in the correspondence of Maximilian II. Before his wedding journey to Spain [1548], he personally wrote to Count Pernštejn asking him to allow his two sons, Jaroslav and Vratislav, to accompany him, promising to keep them from danger.[119] Vratislav, who had already served at the prince's court as a cupbearer *(Mundschenk)*, was allowed to go, but Jaroslav not, on account of their father's long illness. Probably Count Pernštejn feared that in the case of his imminent death, both sons would be far away, and thus there would be no one to administrate their domains. Maximilian however repeated his request one month later, giving thanks for the permission granted to Vratislav but asking for Jaroslav too, if not for the entire journey to Spain then at least for the small leg of it (up to Genoa) that should by no means put him in harm's way.[120]

Loyalty and trustworthiness were traits appreciated highly by the prince(ss)s not only during the transfer but also immediately following it. Faithful companions were supposed to help the princess in adjusting to her new conditions, to mitigate the emotional shock connected with marriage and the transfer to a new country. As we will see below, marital contracts or demands of the other wedding party tended to limit the number of foreign courtiers, brought along with the queen or duchess but this did not stop the princely women to fight for their presence. Right before her arrival in Florence, Joanna of Habsburg [1565] addressed a letter to her brother Ferdinand (representing fatherly authority, since her father was already deceased) asking him to allow Georg von Helfenstein, her current high steward, to stay with her:

> Without my asking, my lord husband as well as his father, Duke of Florence, allowed me to keep in Florence, for my sake and for the time being, a German court *(Hofhaltung)* and some German persons that are pleasant to me.[121]

Joanna would like to keep Count Helfenstein as head of her forthcoming household not only because of his reputation but especially because of "confidence in and familiarity towards him" and in order "to seek his counsel". In addition, both Joanna's husband and father-in-law reportedly were familiar with him and thought of him well.[122]

We do not know how long Helfenstein stayed in Florence—most likely he departed right after the nuptial festivities since he also served as a governor of Tyrol and the local government officials (just four days after Joanna's letter) asked Archduke Ferdinand to not let Helfenstein stay longer in Florence;[123] and a year after the 1565 wedding he took part in the siege of the Hungarian city of Veszprém.[124] Joanna's older sister Eleanor, marrying Duke Guglielmo of Mantua four years earlier [1561], had more luck in getting this type of associate, even without her petition. Around the time Eleanor set forth from

Innsbruck, Annibale Cavriani, the Mantuan envoy in Vienna briefs his patrons back home that the emperor (Ferdinand I, then still alive Eleanor's father) had appointed Maximilian von Dornberg, a court counsellor, "a well-educated gentleman, very qualified, who speaks and writes not only Italian and German, but also other languages" to stay with the future duchess, to help her in speaking Italian and to advise her in other matters.[125] Besides the excellent recommendations which Dornberg received,[126] Cavriani himself vetted the appointee since he had not been familiar with him before: he invited Dornberg to dinner and spoke with him about various matters, and as a result found him very virtuous, shrewd, but above all very pleasant.[127] Writing to the duke, Cavriani sums up his praise of Dornberg by saying:

> I write this to You because You will be able to take advantage of him by courtesy and affection and to have him at your command because he is a well-born gentleman. Your Excellency knows that one can control this type of person with sweetness but for [the controlling of] donkeys one needs a stick.[128]

The princess's chosen assistant needed not only to possess certain skills, such as linguistic competence, but he was also supposed to have positive personal traits and social manners that made him viable for the princess's husband as well. Unlike Eleanor, Joanna's case shows that the princess, facing a change in her life circumstances, actively negotiated with both sides, her native and in-law families, to obtain a trusted and familiar person that was to help her with the transition.

The fellow countrymen at court did not only provide consolation or other types of emotional support during or after the marital transfer but also their presence could have stemmed from a very practical skill which they and the princess shared—the language. As we will see in Chapter 5, very few princely brides came to her new home with a command of their husbands' primary language. Leaving the princess surrounded by foreign-speaking courtiers would be not only psychologically drastic but also very impractical in terms of her everyday needs, such as those of a spiritual character. The chaplain was the only person who could hear the princess's confession as long so it is only logical that such a person would stay with the her.

On the other hand, the great number of foreign-speaking courtiers could have led to the segregation of a princess who, having created her own cultural ghetto, no longer felt the necessity of interacting with the husband's environment. The presence of fellow countrymen could give her a pretext to not even try to learn the language. That was certainly the case of Bianca Maria Sforza [1493], the expulsion of whose courtiers did not help her in mastering German. Many other princesses never learned their husbands' tongue, and conversely, many others acquired such a level of language proficiency that they were not

only able to write letters (Eleanor of Portugal, 1451/1452) but also translate literary works (Eleanor of Scotland, 1448).[129] Each of these princesses held a circle of compatriots as household members, so obviously there was no causal link between language competence, reflecting the princess's incorporation into the new environment, and the presence of fellow countrymen.

Let us go back to the qualifications—or in this case, disqualifications of bridal companions. From Maximilian II [1548]'s above-cited letters to Count Pernštejn, one peculiar aspect stands out: the request for permission from the companions' father. Could not Maximilian just give orders? Why did he need approval? How crucial the father's approval was is shown by another potential companion, Philip, the young duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg who was not allowed to follow the Habsburg on his bridal way because Maximilian had not consulted his father first. Philip begs Cardinal Madruzzo to communicate his excuse to Maximilian, expressing his willingness to join the company and his displeasure at his father's decision, calling it

> quite strange because great lords and potentates do not usually implore their servants, instead, it is necessary that they [= the servants] beseech them [=the lords] in the humblest way….[130]

Even though Maximilian was not an emperor yet, as an archduke and Emperor Charles V's nephew, he ranked much higher than the dukes of Brunswick, and that is why in Philip's view there were no reasons for Maximilian to ask anything from them, for he could have simply commanded it. Yet it seems that contemporary conventions required that if a nobleman wanted to join the bridal company, he had to seek the consent of his fatherly authority, which, in this case, had the last word, no matter how high the prince or princess's status was.

This policy could have been an act of courtesy, made out of respect towards the law of fatherly power over children, but it might have stemmed from a very practical reason—many noblemen in the prince or princess's service were underage. For instance, a couple of letters pertaining to the preparatory process of Barbara and Joanna of Habsburg's journey [1565] request permission from the fathers of young courtiers, already in the princesses' service, to be allowed to be in the bridal trains as well. Even though the letters do not specify the age of the courtiers, it is obvious they had not come of age yet since they had served as *Edelknaben* (pages).[131] Young age was probably also the issue in the case of the above-mentioned Philip of Brunswick, at the time of Maximilian's passage only fifteen years old, but not for Vratislav and Jaroslav of Pernštejn, who were both over eighteen years old. In their case, Maximilian seems to have acted out of respect and deference to their father, an act which for some reason he did not repeat in the case of young Brunswick, which automatically resulted in the father's refusal.

Both Pernštejn sons must have shown their loyalty by faithful service since Maximillian justifies his request by "trust in both of them",[132] a quality—if we are to speculate—that might set them apart from Brunswick. Similarly, Joanna of Habsburg [1565] also begged her brother to keep with her in Florence the German high steward on account of trust and familiarity. Both Habsburg siblings thus prove that the selection of noble companions was not based solely on the grounds of rank, social prestige, or family ties, but it might have been also based on the more personalised needs of the prince or princess.

Besides age and prince(ss)'s favour, another disqualifying factor could be the person's nationality, or rather, political and dynastic allegiance. This trait surfaces in the course of the assembly of Joanna's bridal train prior to her journey to Florence [1565]. Ferdinand, Joanna's brother, suggested to appoint as chief chamberlain none other than Annibale Cavriani, a Mantuan and ambassador at the court in Vienna, whose reports from another wedding (of Joanna's sister Eleanor in 1561) are richly used in this chapter. Responsible for the due arrangements, the Tyrolese government strongly advised against this choice:

> […] we doubt if the said Cavriani should be appointed as chief chamberlain, which is a highly confidential office, since he is not from [the nation of] Your Lordship but from the Italian nation, and thus, he would hold the office alongside other German-born counts, barons, and knights. And then, […] appointing of a Mantuan as a chief chamberlain might cause speculation or displeasure of the gracious lords, the duke and prince of Florence [= Joanna's in-laws]. […] Your Majesty should therefore choose another man from your loyal German subjects.[133]

Despite having previous work experience, being in the service of Catherine of Habsburg in Mantua, Cavriani possessed one quality that disqualified him from holding a position in the bridal household—his Italian, or more precisely, Mantuan origin. Seen from the perspective of either of the wedding parties (the Habsburgs and the Medicis) this was apparently a problem: the Florentines might have had issues with the fact that a representative of the rival Italian state would be a chamberlain of the new duchess, and the Tyrolese and other Austrian aristocracy might have been offended by being sidelined for the sake of a foreigner.

Although the wording hints at the importance of Germanness, it is doubtful whether Cavriani's ethnicity as such was a thorn in the Tyrolese government's flesh. By the mid-sixteenth century, the court of the Austrian Habsburgs was a multi-ethnic place, welding together aristocrats from numerous hereditary lands (Austria, Bohemia, Hungary) or other parts of Europe.[134] Although the local Austrian and South-German nobility held the upper hand in terms of the court offices, the Innsbruck officers can hardly be accused of xenophobia. If they did not have an ulterior motive, such as jealousy or intrigues, the most

important reason for rejecting Cavriani was the fact that he was not a direct subject of the Habsburgs. This, by extension, reveals that the bridal household was not a sole assemblage of personnel that could have been made up of random bureaucrats. On the contrary, it bore a strong political meaning, aiming to represent the aristocratic community of the kingdom or duchy that entered the marital alliance with another one. Due to the personal character of princely power in medieval and early modern times, interdynastic marriage was always an act of foreign relations, a pact that was signed by the family ties of the rulers. As John Watkins argues, one of the first monarchs to break with this tradition was Queen Elizabeth I. In her decision to not marry, i.e. to not participate in interdynastic marriage system, was a precursor of the new ways of diplomacy that was not tied to kin relations of rulers.[135]

The selection of the most significant members of the nobility for the wedding train was a clear political statement and it expressed an affirmative stance towards the marital union. In a way, the aristocracy, involved in the journey, symbolised the body of the realm giving its consent to the marriage, since this union was not only a pact between two families but between two realms (or principalities). Therefore the noble entourage was a key tool in promoting the political meaning and social standing of the wedding. This, as stated above, was not a goal *per se* but had direct diplomatic repercussions. This was beneficial for both the dynasties and the aristocracy: the ruling house could demonstrate the support of local nobility to the outside world whereas the aristocrats could become part of the marital project, appropriating it for their own social promotions. The rejection of Cavriani should be read in this light: the estates claimed their rightful place in the princely and state event, challenging the desires of the ruling house. It also alludes to Dries Raeymaekers's hypothesis of how the Habsburgs tried to circumvent the strict state interest: as a way to cement their dynastic unity, they tended to create a patronage system, which extended far beyond their territories.[136] Ferdinand's suggestion to appoint a skilled Mantuan professional might have been one of those cases where the Habsburg princes prioritised a personal or dynastic interest rather than the one of their estates or polity.

Marital symmetry: the other wedding party objections

Another important factor in the formation of the entourage was a symmetry between two wedding parties. This aspect is quite visible in Arcimboldi's suggestions for Bianca Maria's retinue [1488], already discussed before. Being familiar with the King of Hungary's ways the archbishop states that Hungarians will certainly send to Milan to fetch Bianca the most splendid embassy, so the Milanese must match this level of splendour in a number of people, sartorial lavishness, and overall pomp. As stated above, the Milanese went to such great lengths of finding out who would be in the other wedding party's legation that

they even dispatched special messengers to Hungary—and Arcimboldi was one of them.

Getting the information about the composition of bridal train could have had severe repercussions on the wedding plans: it was expected that Catherine of Austria would be accompanied to Poland [1553] by her brother, Maximilian II, who was supposed to join the company. Maximilian indeed set off with his sister but in Olomouc, roughly halfway between Poland and Vienna, he turned back due to an illness. Unaware of this change of plans, Catherine's groom King Sigismund II Augustus sent a special squadron of knights, headed by Jan Drohojowski,[137] a bishop of Kujawy, to welcome him at the borders of the kingdom. Yet without Maximilian there, the bishop's welcome delegation was futile and Sigismund was reportedly greatly displeased, having thought that the presence of such a prominent guest—at that time an expected heir to the imperial throne—would help to embellish the wedding.[138] Maximilian's sudden change of mind left a bitter taste and had an impact on the festivities as well: his brother Ferdinand, coming in his stead, reportedly learned about Sigismund's dissatisfaction, and during the wedding festivities, he did not treat him "in the way he was supposed to" *(nie tak się miał ku Krolowi, iako było potrzeba)*. For example, the Habsburg brother-in-law did not come out of his lodgings to welcome Sigismund when he wanted to pay him a visit.[139]

Bridal households were painstakingly discussed and negotiated on a diplomatic level not only to ensure smooth progress of the ceremonies but also because its parts were meant to stay with the princess after the wedding. Although painstakingly designed, they were usually short-lived and in most cases, they underwent significant changes once the festivities were over and the princesses started to settle down in their new environment. In the early modern period, different courts opted for different strategies of integrating or repudiating this strange element. Over time, the more lenient policies gave way to stricter ones: the goal was no longer to integrate these foreign courtiers but to get rid of them as soon as possible. By the eighteenth century, to quote Fabian Persson's term, this "clean break" model prevailed at the major European courts.[140] Royal husbands tended to staff it with subjects and aristocrats from their own domains, and at the same time, to eliminate foreign courtiers who were deemed to be a disruptive or even openly hostile element.[141]

If and in what number the princess's fellow countrymen could stay was left at her husband's discretion. For instance, the wedding contract of Eleanor of Portugal and Emperor Frederick III [1451] stipulates that

> […] for her greater solace, pleasant company and service *(pro sui maiori solatio atque opportuna societate)*, the most illustrious infanta will be able to bring along and keep with herself in Germany some of the Portuguese noble officials and servants, that were associated with her earlier on, both male and female, and the most illustrious King of Romans [= Frederick]

> will consider the way and number he finds suitable for them to say and have a (court) position.[142]

Although only one Portuguese lady-in-waiting is known to have stayed with Eleanor,[143] most probably there were more of them.[144] The joint *Frauenzimmer* of Mary of Hungary and Anne of Bohemia prior to their weddings [1521] included an eight-years-old "morin" servant.[145] Is it possible that she might have been a descendant of Eleanor's attendant of Moorish origin? If so, it must have been the third generation of such a servant given the great time distance (almost seventy years).

Nevertheless, the provision set forth in Eleanor's wedding contract is rather vague and in the end, it leaves everything at Frederick's discretion. But there are examples of more precise arrangements that reflected not only the post-wedding phase but also the bridal train as well. The archival folder of Catherine of Habsburg [1549] in the State Archives of Mantua contains a list of household members, written prior to her arrival in Italy. Mostly likely compiled by the Mantuan envoys, sent to negotiate the marriage and accompany the archduchess, it includes information about who from the court officials is going to stay and who is not. This confirms the fact, already visible in the 1488 Milanese case—the bridal trains were arranged not only with respect to the expectations of the other wedding party but also sometimes with its direct involvement. In this case, the future duchess of Mantua (the author of the list did not forget to write down that the princess is also going to stay) is allowed to keep most of her *Frauenzimmer* (six noble damsels, chamber lady, two chamber maids, a laundry lady), a tailor, a cook, a chaplain, six pages, six stable servants, and two chamber servants, which in total makes twenty-seven individuals.[146] A similar number is found in the German court of Barbara of Habsburg [1565] in Ferrara (32).[147] Eleanor of Habsburg's [1561] *Frauenzimmer* in Mantua consisted of four German and four Italian ladies-in-waiting, one high stewardess (ethnicity unknown) and two vice stewardesses, each of them from a different ethnic group.[148] Although it might seem like a high number, all of these positions are minor in terms of authority; all leading office-holders of Catherine's household, like the high steward, stewardess, chamberlain, stable master, were expected to leave so their places could be filled with appointees of the princess's husband. It seems that for kings and dukes it was probably not so important *how many* but rather *who* of their wives' courtiers would remain, as the possibility of staffing the power positions with their own liegemen would enable them to control the whole court.

A similar pattern of pre-journey court negotiations emerges for Catherine's second marriage to Sigismund II Augustus of Poland [1553]. Two undated instructions for Polish envoys negotiating her bridal household give further proof to this hypothesis. In the first mandate, Sigismund explicitly refuses 34 out of 47 positions, Catherine is allowed to bring only four ladies-in-waiting

and some minor household office-holders (doctor, physician, pages, smith, kitchen and *Frauenzimmer* servants, laundry ladies).[149] In the second, "more secrete" *(secretior)* instruction the envoys are given some leeway in negotiation, and eight more officials are permitted to come, but only a few of those are high in the household hierarchy (chamberlain, main kitchen steward, main chef).[150] As the main reason for rebuttal of other German courtiers is stated the right of Polish nobility to hold these posts and "our people cannot be deprived of these services, since they belong to them based on privilege", and to do so, would ignite *obtrectationes et offensiones hominum nostrorum* (malice and offence of our people).[151]

Even though this might have been one of the king's motivations, it was certainly not the only one as some comments in the *secretior* mandate show: discussing the position of Catherine's secretary, Sigismund is prepared to accept him only if he will be "content with his status, not sumptuous nor ambitious."[152] In this, Sigismund was acting on a precedent—his previous wife and Catherine's sister Elizabeth [1543] brought along two men Jan Masurpin and Jan Lang, although not in the official role of secretary but rather as translators and envoys for her father, Ferdinand I. Particularly the former reportedly behaved very arrogantly, clashing with Bona Sforza, Sigismund's mother, and had to leave Poland after three months.[153] Also, the main chamber maid is allowed to come "only if she would not claim a higher authority", meaning, that she would not be in charge of the female household—because "there will be matrons here who would do that".[154] Clearly, staffing of a bridal household that would be transformed to the queen's court after the wedding had power connotations and it was crucial for a king to control it by appointing nominees from his own aristocracy. In addition to gaining control, the sovereign would get the favour of his own nobility.

Yet the court leadership made up of the husband's subjects could not have been as effective a tool as it might seem. Bianca Maria's [1493/1494] compatriots are a good example. Allegedly the Italians disrespected the orders of her new German high steward: one of them kept entering and leaving the residence in spite of the steward's ban, while another refused to follow the order saying he would do so only if Bianca herself commanded him.[155] Violanta Cayma, one of the chief ladies-in-waiting, wielded such power over the princess that she could easily manipulate Bianca to squander money or disregard Maximilian's decisions. The princess was reportedly so fixated on her damsel that she was even screaming "Oh, my Violanta" in her sleep. The tipping point of Maximilian's patience came when the dame started to meddle into the foreign policy by conspiring with the Neapolitan ambassador. Gradually the Italians were sent back to Milan and three years after the wedding Bianca Maria was surrounded by an almost entirely German court.[156]

Bitter conflicts and the partisanship of the courtiers with respect to their origin were by no means confined to Bianca Maria and Maximilian. Carafa

recommends Beatrice thank her husband for allowing her to keep the Italian ladies but in the same breath, he advises her to warn these ladies to live harmoniously with the Hungarian ones, to take care that no word or action offends them. Frankly and cynically, he explains why—these new attendants, assigned by the husband, are not like the ones at her home court. While the latter always strove to portray the princess in a favourable light in the father's eyes, the former will do their best to do quite the opposite and make the king resentful towards her.[157]

Despite his cynical remarks, Carafa recommends countering this clandestine hostility with a carrot-and-carrot strategy, combining compliance with kindness: the queen should curry favour with the Hungarian courtiers, take special care of them, win them over with gifts, and so on. As we will see in Chapter 6, many princesses inadvertently followed this approach, paying respect to their new courtiers and subjects and treating them with uppermost courtesy. Yet this was not the only way. A completely opposite one can be found in the letters of Maria of Bavaria, who accompanied her daughter Margaret to Spain in 1598/1599. Against the demands of her new courtiers, Maria advises the strict stick-and-stick policy:

> Margaret will not let herself be pushed around but she will be able to show her teeth to the Spaniards. She should not humble herself to the Spaniards but look quite grumpy.[158]

Either way, there is a certain benefit in both approaches. Both can be read as an opportunity for the princess: when following Carafa's method, she could be a mediator of conflict and prove herself to be a competent manager of her household. Through resistance or refusal to bend she could have found her own voice, expressing her identity, personal or family interests.

Why to join? Motivations of travel companions

Up now, we have seen the reasons and agenda of wedding parties, either royal families or their administrators, reflected in the structure of the spousal train. But what were the motivations of the actual courtiers—the members of the entourage? Was it attractive to take part in the wedding journey? We must not forget that these journeys, like any other premodern travel, were a dangerous enterprise. Even though few brides perished during their transfer, the same cannot be said for their companions. The already-mentioned doctor Lutz, dying because of the fever in Marseille is just a tip of the iceberg. During the same journey of Margaret of Habsburg [1598/1599] at least nine other people died, many others had to stay in Spain. On the return journey to Austria, even the *Hofmeisterin* (stewardess) of the princess's mother perished.[159] The Spanish fleet scheduled to accompany Margaret of Habsburg back to Iberia [1497], suffered

extreme losses when wintering at the coast of the Low Countries. Reportedly, as many as 9,000 people died as a result of inadequate clothing, undernourishment, and disease.[160]

Unfortunately, there are not many sources that would enable us to hear the voices of wedding courtiers. However, from the scant evidence we have, it is safe to say that the participation on this still potentially life-risking event was generally deemed appealing. Perhaps the finest example is a section from the memoirs of Andreas Kuzal von Lapitz. In his teenage years, this nobleman took part in the coronation journey of Frederick III to Rome in 1452. While not strictly the nuptial journey per se, this expedition is also closely related to the wedding, since the soon-to-be crowned emperor was supposed to meet his bride Eleanor of Portugal halfway in Siena. Thus, we can extrapolate from Kuzal's impressions the rationale behind somebody's reasons to joining the nuptial entourage. Judging from his account, the prospect of being a part of it seems to have been an almost irresistible pursuit:

> When I heard about the splendid *(köstliche)* journey, my heart started to beat because I would like to go as well, but my lord already had three pages, all from the noble house. So I feared a lot that I would stay behind. There was an old nobleman in the castle, our steward, who was very fond of me. I flattered him with gifts and diligent service so he would intercede with the lord on my behalf and take me along.[161]

Clearly, Kuzal was not only interested in the journey but did not hesitate to employ material and immaterial means to become part of it. Unfortunately, he does not state his reasons explicitly but a reader may very well guess it from his subsequent descriptions or from the adjectives he attributes to the journey. He uses the term *köstliche*—splendid or marvellous, probably meant to express the magnificence of participants, opulent receptions, and banquets, as well as the richness of foreign lands, which Kuzal had the chance to experience. Aside from saturating one's curiosity and interests, participation would also mean a booster for the member's prestige and social status, which might be leveraged immediately, via various social-networking opportunities, or many years afterwards, in writing one's memoirs.

What was there for the women in the train? As stated before, being a stewardess of the ladies' court was a lucrative position for its social contacts, prestige, or financial income, and this also applies to the ladies-in-waiting. Besides the financial and social benefits, potentially interesting for every member of the court, there was another advantage of serving as a court maiden: a lucrative marriage to a prominent courtier or nobleman. The Habsburg court especially served as a place for concluding marriages and an integration mechanism for the nobility from various parts of their often culturally disconnected and culturally diverse domains.[162] That is why aristocratic families did not hesitate to spend

time and money to acquire the position of lady-in-waiting for their daughters who, if admitted to the queen's court, could significantly enhance the social standing of both themselves and their families. Admittance was highly competitive, with waiting lists for the potential candidates.[163] The prestige linked with the position required a prospective lady to be equipped with a trousseau as if she were about to enter into marriage.[164]

Nonetheless, the profitable marriage and advantages associated with court service were of a long-term character, that is, materialising long after the bridal journey was over. A key condition of success was the ability to stay in the prince(ss)'s service after the wedding. That is why it seems, as Katrin Keller notes, that the main motivation for entering the *Frauenzimmer* was the proximity and access to the princess. The physical closeness might have been turned to the physicological and emotional closeness. Such an amicable bond could be an ideal position, not only for boosting one's status but also for seeking positions for other family members or increasing the family's wealth and social standing.[165] This general statement applies even more for the travelling *Frauenzimmer*, since being a part of it meant broadening the family's horizons—it no longer served one dynasty but at least two. Furthermore, the challenges, connected with the wedding transfer, might have had even stronger impact on building the emotional ties with the companions. A good example is Elizabeth of Habsburg [1570] and her namesake lady-in-waiting, Elizabeth of Pernštejn, later of Fürstenberg. As the study of their mutual correspondence shows, over the course of the journey, wedding, and the princess's stay in France, the two women developed a very special relationship that lasted for the rest of their lives. The princess repeatedly asked the lady to eschew formalisms in writing, and, on the contrary, the lady used this connection for the sponsoring of her family members.[166]

Even though some ladies or officials may have served the princess during her maiden life, naturally the bridal court needed to be composed from new recruits as well, as it was unrealistic to staff it with the persons from the queen or king's surroundings only. We have seen above the petition of countess of Nagarollo applying for the job of Catherine of Habsburg's [1549] main stewardess. Maximilian II's recommendation could increase her odds, but eventually, she did not succeed in securing the post. Usually, the positions were assigned to the family members of court functionaries,[167] for instance, the countess of Pescini, who unlike Ursula of Nagarollo clinched the post of Catherine's *Hofmeisterin*, and brought along her two daughters and a niece to Mantua.[168] Be it as it may, it is obvious that the bridal household was a sought-after occupation and staffing was another occasion for courtly patronage.

Others, younger aristocrats, might have viewed the journey as a means of self-instruction or education, especially when the journey headed to attractive locations from the point of view of art or architecture, such as Italy. In other words, joining the bridal train could be like a mini Grand Tour for them.

For Ferdinand of Tyrol, accompanying his sister Catherine to Mantua [1549], the Italian journey was a major source of artistic and cultural inspiration.[169] It is possible that the craving for Renaissance art was one of the motivations for him to make this trip, although one can argue that the kin relations were a more decisive factor—after all, Ferdinand went with his sisters to Poland too. A similar educational logic is present, albeit not well-pronounced, in the letters between Emperor Maximilian II and Duke Albrecht of Bavaria. In the first one of them, Maximilian tries to persuade Albrecht to send his sons to accompany his sister Joanna to Florence in 1565:

> This journey would not be useless for the young lords. And your Grace would also show especially great amity to the duke (of Florence).[170]

When Albrecht allowed one son to go, Maximilian comments it in the second letter:

> I hope that Your Grace would not regret it (the decision) because more the young people see, more it serves them for the future things.[171]

Obviously, Maximilian understood the journey as a possibility for the young Bavarian prince not only to travel and get some experience, gain new ideas, but also to please the Duke of Florence with his presence. As we have seen above, the high status of the guests enhanced the overall magnificence of the entire event. The presence of another person of ducal rank would be a much welcomed decoration of the overall nuptial splendour. Such a favour would be an inconspicuous way of cultivating friendly foreign relations. At least that is the idea behind Maximilian's letters, arguably reflecting contemporary practice. Viewed from this perspective, taking part in the bridal train and subsequently, in the wedding festivities, could have been a tool for creating and maintaining social contacts.

Motivations of many bridal companions, however, can be guessed from their behaviour during the journey. Again, not many such descriptions survive, but if they do, they bear witness to the geographical or religious curiosity of the courtiers. We already met Kuzal, whose incentives might have been of a similar kind, and the unfortunate doctor Cyriacus Lutz who perished during the sea voyage in 1599. Also, Nicolas Lanckman, and Jacob Motz, the already-mentioned envoys of Frederick III wanted to make a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostella on their way to Portugal in 1451. Eventually, they made it to Saint James's shrine but only after running into bandits who robbed them of all of their possessions. But even before that, Lanckman's travelogue abounds in accounts of miraculous places, exotic stories, and other wonders which the two Germans saw when crossing the Iberian peninsula. For instance, in Navarre, Lanckman was amazed by strange female ornaments—horns on the headfronts

and cloaks. In the kingdom of Aragon and especially in Zaragoza, the high number of "Saracens" struck him: there are not just Muslim settlements there but also mosques, schools, and feasts. In Santo Domingo de la Calzada, Lanckman refers to the famous chicken story, miraculously brought back to life to testify to the innocence of the pilgrim who had been unjustly condemned to death.[172]

Compostella might have been an extreme case but detours to religious sites or other worth-visiting places were a standard part of the wedding journeys. The relic and monastery hunt will be addressed in Chapter 4; for now, it is important to say that the incentive to make such a diversion from the direct track might have been made by the courtiers too. Delays and prolongation, connected with the travel, could have been filled with sightseeing. In the previous chapter, we saw how Piccolomini, waiting for the arrival of Eleanor of Portugal's ships [1451/1452], filled in the time by visiting ancient monuments near Talamone. Probably the most curious case occurred during the voyage of another Portuguese princess, Maria of Guimarães in 1565. As the flotilla, carrying her and her train to the Flanders awaited wind near the Portuguese coast, certain noblemen wanted to pass the time and made an excursion on the mainland. Suddenly the wind came and the sailors sent the signal for them to return on board. However, the aristocrats did not make it in time and the ships sailed without them. They rented a small boat and for a while, they tried to follow the flotilla but unsuccessfully. The final nail in the coffin of their endeavour was an encounter with the English ship which, mistaking them for the Inquisition, fired on them but missed. The marooned aristocrats then made it back to Lisbon, where the princess's brother took care of them and dispatch them to Brussels via post carriages. Surprisingly, they still arrived there two days before the princess.[173]

It is up to debate to what extent such trips were a motivation for somebody to join the bride(groom)'s entourage. Clearly, for Piccolomini or the stranded aristocrats, the short excursions were a way to amuse themselves while already being part of the enterprise. However, the evidence that such little tours did occur indicates that there was indeed a perception that travelling with the prince(ss) was a chance to visit foreign lands, pay reverence to sacred shrines, taste exotic food, or experience strange customs. It draws us back to the otherness, discussed in the previous chapter—the wedding journeys were a catalyst for such encounters, though only for a limited time. Not only from the point of view of the bridal traveller or uniting dynasties but also for the people standing in the lower tiers. Therefore, it can be argued that these journeys functioned as a vehicle for the courtiers—people in the proximity of the princely bride(groom)—to get into space and cross their narrow geographical limits.

Choosing favourite courtiers as travel companions can be read as another form of asserting a ruler's power over the nobility in the intentions of Norbert Elias's thesis that the early modern court worked as a golden cage for

nobility, desperately stuck in a vicious cycle of consumption and competition for the ruler's favour.[174] As Philippa Woodcock rightly points out, these travelling entourages could have been in some cases very limited. This enabled the king to let the aristocrats compete for positions, thus further manipulating and controlling them.[175] However, the entire situation can be viewed in the opposite light and the wedding journeys as a more centrifugal force: rather than confining the courtiers, they brought them out, putting them on the international stage. Also, as we have seen in von Kuzal's case, there were manipulations from the courtiers' side too. Being part of the journey obviously seems to have been an attractive choice for many of them no matter the ruler's or ruling dynasty's wishes.

Despite all just brought-up arguments, not every spousal transfer was a tempting opportunity. For courtiers, bound by feudal ties to either of the wedding party, blaming one's health was the safest choice to reject attendance and keep the lord's good graces. For example, Betrando de' Rossi, count of Berceto, excuses himself for not taking part in Bianca Maria Sforza's nuptials in this way:

> I have been ill for several months now, as, I believe, Your Excellency has heard. At the beginning of the cold [he is writing at the end of October], the evil has arouse a bit, so I was told by doctors it will be impossible for me to ride this winter without danger of getting even more sick […][176]

Without further evidence, it is difficult to say whether this reason was substantiated or just a pretext, although one might wonder if indeed so anxious to come, Betrando could not have opted for a more comfortable means of transport than a horse ride. However, it would be only logical if aristocrats wanted to keep their distance from the events that posed significant financial challenges for their representation. Such a strategy was quite common in the early modern courts.[177] Franca Varallo showed how the Pavia aristocrats and burghers, reluctant to join the welcome party of Margaret of Habsburg [1598/1599] used the same strategy, justifying their claims by illness, poor economic situation, or pressing family business.[178]

The pros of attendance did not always outweigh the cons, for example, when the princess's final destination was not prestigious enough. This is the sense we are getting from the letter of Perotto da Vesach who refers back to his lord, the Duke of Ferrara. When commenting about the wedding preparations in Naples and Beatrice of Aragon's [1476] departure for Hungary, he does not forget to say that

> …I am not going to Hungary, because the lord does not want me to leave Italy. I am quite glad I do not have to go to barbarians without reason. I swear by God, Lord, I do not know about any other thing (reason for going there) except that I like (the idea) that when coming back, I will relate about the bestiality of that country.[179]

Paradoxically, we find Perotto as a captain of town of Zvolen (Zolna, modern-day Slovakia, then a part of Hungary) a few years later, so clearly, he did not find Hungary so bestial after all when it came to the job opportunity. Rather than a form of xenophobia, this statement was more likely to praise his current lord, duke of Ferrara, by contrasting the cultured Italian city with the barbarian trans-Alpine realm.

Maintaining moral profile

So far, we have mostly seen the benefits of the wedding entourages, not just for the uniting dynasties and their representation but arguably for the people taking part in them as well. However, they were not without difficulties either. The issues connected with different cultural, linguistic, or ethnic backgrounds of the courtiers were already discussed. Yet there was another, potentially much graver problem. Generally, in the Middle Ages and early modern era, traveling was seen as a dangerous enterprise. There were not only physical perils lurking on the way, like bandits, robbers, wild animals, bad weather, bad roads but dangers on the moral level too. Travelling was seen as a suspicious activity at best, there was a deep distrust in vagrant scholars, monks, and knights as these people were associated with immoral acts, sins, and so on. Mobility was viewed as a time when human beings are especially exposed to sinful conduct which would not be so easy in their standard, stable life.

Again, the most telling example is Andreas Kuzal von Lapitz, already quoted in the previous section. In another part of his memoirs von Lapitz describes how the entourage of the now crowned Emperor Frederick and Empress Eleanor of Portugal travelled to Naples to spend Eastertide there. Von Lapitz praises the Neapolitan hospitality—in every town there was a rich table full of roasted meat and fountains filled with wine waiting for them. But without any trace of shame, he describes another type of entertainment as well:

> The women in brothels were all ordered, nobody [from us] had to bring his own money, everything was paid by the (Neapolitan) court, there was Moorish and other beautiful women, according to everybody's lust.[180]

At first hearing, this blatant description of sexual pleasures might come as shock and it makes one wonder if von Kuzal did not exaggerate for dramatic effect to impress his readers even more. The combination of nuptial travel and brothels might sound strange, perhaps because the festival books or court panegyric managed to promote the image of an immaculate royal feast, full of solemn processions, triumphal arches, and welcoming orations. Further evidence of this unexpected blend comes from the 1570 Speyer, the starting point of Anne and Elizabeth of Habsburg's journeys and also the site of Elizabeth's proxy wedding. It was Achatius Seawer, the court provost *(Hofprofoss)* to the princesses'

father Emperor Maximilian II, who was arranging the prostitutes and imposing fines on them. What raised the eyebrows was not the provost's procuring but his fining and jailing of the women, which was the prerogative of the imperial marshal *(Reichserbmarchall)*.[181] The wedding journeys are not viewed as occasions for receiving sexual services but perhaps they should. After all, there were hundreds of men in the princess's trains, who might have seen this expedition as an adventure in all meanings of this word or at least, they did not have a hard time succumbing to carnal pleasures.

Unlike for them, however, it was a major issue for the princess and her female company. In general, chastity was deemed as the most important virtue of queens, given their crucial role in maintaining dynastic lines. If any shadow of doubt could have been cast on the queen's virtuousness, the legitimacy of her offspring as royal heirs would also be questioned.[182] Therefore projecting chastity and devoutness was a desideratum for any royal bride and this could be achieved by orderly management of the ladies' court too. In other words, the princess's closest surrounding had to follow the strict rules that would cast aside any trace of dishonour.

In German lands, the life of the *Frauenzimmer* was regulated by court ordinances, issued irregularly by the 1480s. We possess one ordinance from 1483, authored by Duke Sigismund of Tirol for the court of his second wife Catherine of Saxony, and a bulk of others for the joint court of Anne of Bohemia and Mary of Hungary who lived together for several years prior to their weddings [1521].[183] Stemming from a belief that women were more predisposed to sin, these ordinances aimed to set not only the organisational but also the behavioural standards of the court. The daily routine, types of work and entertainment, permission of visitors, sleeping spots, allocation of places during meals, holy services, or processions, as well as rules for correspondence, were laid out by these documents. Besides the stewardess, the important role of implementing the rules was played by the steward—who could in certain circumstances reside directly in the *Frauenzimmer* in the case that his wife served there, if not he had to leave the chambers by 8 pm—and also porters who were responsible for guarding the entrance to the chambers.[184]

Sigismund's ordinances requested the stewardess and the ladies-in-waiting to take an oath of obedience and to swear loyalty to the duke and the duchess but only "in the things pertaining to their honour", which might have been a clause protecting the woman from the inappropriate behaviour and demands of the duke.[185] The *Hofmeisterin* further swore to fulfil the duchess's wishes, to keep her secrets, and to report everything that might harm her patroness. The other ladies were required to abstain from idleness and unnecessary talking during dining and to not break from the duchess's company during trips to the countryside or gardens.

Unfortunately, we do not possess any *Frauenzimmer* ordinances specifically for the bridal journey, all cited examples were intended for periods of stability

within a special residential circle, even though this stability was only relative as the queen or duchess frequently set off for various kinds of trips. The ordinances, after all, anticipated such situations and stressed instruction in what order the ladies should proceed or that they should never stray from the princess and stewardess's sight. Nevertheless, at least unwritten regulations for the ladies accompanying the princess to her husband must have existed. A strong hint to this is to be found in Carafa's model version of the bridal journey. The Neapolitan court doyen dedicates two paragraphs to the way the ladies' court should be ruled. These lines are unique, as the medieval and early modern conduct literature seldom commented on the manners of ladies-in-waiting and never on the females accompanying travelling brides.[186] In addition, they disprove to some extent the notion that the Franco-Italian female households were somewhat laxer than their German counterparts when it came to regulating the man—woman contact.[187] What were these recommendations?

De institutione exhorts the queen to be personally involved in arranging the chambers of her ladies, especially their windows and doors, which should be rigorously enclosed because these things "tend to be a cause of much temptation". Then, the ladies should be strongly advised to shun overly close relationships.[188] In another section, Carafa speaks about the necessity of appointing an overseer, or rather several, since one could be delayed by the narrowness of the roads. Riding before the ladies these watchers should keep an eye on the women so they would not be stopped by men and indulge in talks with them. If provoked to speak, the ladies should not respond, unless they have permission to do so.[189]

It is hard to tell whether this level of standards was sought-after also for companions of the travelling bridegrooms or if they were limited to the females, thus making these moral ideals a clear gender difference in the travel of princely bride and groom. Carafa however did author another occasional work dedicated to Beatrice's brother Federico transferring to the French court to marry in 1479. Even though counsels contained in this text are aimed at the post-wedding life in the foreign environment rather than the journey, there is a section advising the prince that he should take care of the comportment of his courtiers, as the behaviour of his subordinates will cast fame (or shame) on his persona.[190] Thus to some extent, the ideal of the well-behaved and honourable court was applicable to both prince and princess, but it was much more urgent for the latter, given the premodern doubts about the female sex as well as queen's role in dynastic succession.

In the same way as the ordinances, Carafa's guidelines aim to protect moral standards in the *Frauenzimmer* by limiting its contact with the outer world. In his view, the controlling measures applied during the journey should be the same as for the time spent at a fixed abode (i.e. before and after the wedding)—he starts with a statement that Beatrice used to take care of these matters very carefully even before, meaning, before her transfer to the husband. Therefore we can presume that the women accompanying the princess were required to fulfil the

same strict instructions regulating their behaviour during the bridal journey as during the daily court routine, perhaps even more severe, as the journey provided many dangers and, as Carafa puts it, temptations to the chastity of the ladies. The potential lack of self-restraint associated with travel led premodern society to look suspiciously on travellers as a whole, but especially on travelling women.[191] If the noble bride and her female companions wanted to preserve their chaste reputation, they needed to cast aside any shadow of licentiousness and to look more like a group of nuns than noble ladies, which was the ultimate ideal presented in the *Frauenzimmer* ordinances.[192] On the other hand, if the ladies managed to fulfil this image, it could enhance the overall public reputation of their patroness. Therefore, we can say that the *Frauenzimmer*, or more precisely the way it was governed, could be used for propaganda purposes as well.

In sum, the bridal train, a massive group of people accompanying the princely groom or bride, performed many functions. It did not only former carried out the everyday needs of the prince/princess, visualised the social standing of the prince(ss), dynasty, and entire kingdom, but also constructed the princess's reputation or facilitated the process of her incorporation into the new environment. The members of the noble entourage could have been chosen for their moral qualities, or conversely, they could have been excluded due to financial reasons. Overall the wedding parties opted for equipping the bride(groom)s with the greatest noble entourage possible as this gathering of prominent individuals created the ceremonial splendour and magnificence that directly translated into social standing. In a way, the entourage stood acted as a vehicle—an animated triumphal carriage, so to speak—that enabled the journey to fully shine and bring its dynastic, political, and social importance into the spotlight. As a whole, it operated as a non-accredited diplomatic agent that better than anything conveyed to the outer world the magnificence and power that imbued the bridal travel. The examples of rulers who betrayed this principle (Frederick III, Guglielmo Gonzaga) show the rejection of this system did not eventually lead to the souring of direct political relations but added to the cheap public image of the monarch, which did severe harm to his reputation. From the point of view of courtiers, participation could have been an attractive option, which, naturally, depended on the destination as well as personal motives. It is however problematic to speak about one type of bridal courtier. There were in fact as many of them as people travelling with the prince(ss). For some, the journey was a more-or-less regular court service, for others, only an opportunity to take a lift. This chapter also wanted to show that the bridal train is hard to grasp and categorise. Similar to other princely courts, it consists of a smaller and a wider part (household and aristocratic entourage) but besides them, there are other segments (fetching-off delegation, welcome parties, or hop on-hof off individuals) which make it a giant snowball, constantly accruing and rolling, and triggering the avalanche of festive splendour.

Notes

1 Lanckman, *Diário de viagem*, 54.
2 Pina, *Chronica de el-Rei D. Affonso V*, I:125.
3 Karl Rausch, *Die burgundische Heirat Maximilians I.* (Vienna: Carl Konegen, 1880), 175–176.
4 Hochrinner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 33.
5 Fleming, *Juana I.*, 17.
6 Mulryne, Watanabe-O'Kelly, and Shewring, *Europa Triumphans*, 1:394–395.
7 Amalie Fößel, *Die Königin im mittelalterlichen Reich: Herrschaftsausübung, Herrschaftsrechte, Handlungsspielräume* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2000), 87–88.
8 Gregory of Tours, *Libri historiarum X*, VI, 45.
9 Gudbrand Vigfusson, ed., *The Saga of Hacon and a Fragment of the Saga of Magnus*, trans. George Webbe Dasent, vol. 4, Icelandic Sagas and Other Historical Documents Relating to the Settlements and Descents of the Northmen on the British Isles (London, 1894), 313.
10 There is no generally accepted distinction between these the princely court and household, see for instance Ronald G. Asch, 'Introduction: Court and Household from the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Centuries', in *Princes, Patronage, and the Nobility. The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age c. 1450–1650*, ed. Ronald G. Asch and Adolf M. Birke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1–38. Many scholars, however, tend to agree that the household was responsible for the material infrastructure. Réthelyi, 'Mary of Hungary in Court Context (1521–1531)', 17. For the sake of clarity, I use the term 'household' for the first part of the bridal train.
11 Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben, eds., *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies-in-Waiting across Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2014).
12 Theresa Earenfight, *Royal and Elite Households in Medieval and Early Modern Europe. More than Just a Castle* (Leiden: Brill, 2018).
13 Jan Hirschbiegel and Werner Paravicini, eds., *Das Frauenzimmer. Die frau bei Hofe in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit* (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2000).
14 Werner Paravicini, 'Das Frauenzimmer. Die Frau bei Hofe in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit', in *Das Frauenzimmer. Die Frau bei Hofe in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, ed. Jan Hirschbiegel and Werner Paravicini (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2000), 23.
15 E.g. Orsolya Réthelyi, 'Mary of Hungary in Court Context (1521–1531)' (PhD diss., Central European University, 2010); Sarah Jemima Bercusson, 'Gift-Giving, Consumption and the Female Court in Sixteenth-Century Italy' (PhD diss., Queen Mary College, University of London, 2009).
16 TLA, HS 5565, p. 41.
17 Paravicini, 'Das Frauenzimmer', 15–16.
18 Michail Bojcov, '»Das Frauenzimmer« oder Die Fraue bei Hofe«?', in *Das Frauenzimmer. Die Frau bei Hofe in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. Jan Hirschbiegel and Werner Paravicini (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2000), 328–329.
19 Bojcov, 337 and elsewhere.
20 Katrin Keller, 'Ladies-in-Waiting at the Imperial Court of Vienna from 1550–1700: Structures, Responsibilities and Career Patterns', in *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies-in-Waiting across Early Modern Europe*, ed. Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 77.
21 The concise overview of the debates in Réthelyi, 'Mary of Hungary in Court Context (1521–1531)', 17–19.
22 Fößel, *Die Königin*, 82.

23 Fößel rejects as unsubstantial the hypothesis that queen's court officers played subordinate role in respect to the king's officers; Brigitte Streich produces evidence of the separate financial record for *curia domini* and *curia domine* as soon as in 1350. Fößel, 82, footnote 418; Brigitte Streich, 'Frauenhof und Frauenzimmer', in *Das Frauenzimmer. Die Frau bei Hofe in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. Jan Hirschbiegel and Werner Paravicini (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2000), 251. In contrast, J. L. Laynesmith argues that even though the queen's court was a distinct entity, it was closely linked to and dependent on the king's court. J.L. Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queen. English Queenship 1445–1503* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 222, quoted in Réthelyi, 'Mary of Hungary in Court Context (1521–1531)', 19.
24 Keller, 'Ladies-in-Waiting', 77.
25 FHKA, AHK NÖHA, W 61/A-36, fol. 36–39.
26 ASMn, Archivio Gonzaga 444, fol. 604.
27 TLA, Pestarchiv, Akten I, 176.
28 TLA, Ferdinandea 23 (not foliated).
29 Ferdinand Menčík, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der kaiserlichen Hofämter* (Vienna: In Commission bei Carl Gerold's Sohn, 1899), 18–19.
30 Keller, 'Ladies-in-Waiting', 79.
31 Barbara of Habsburg's court list does not record any of these offices but it is very unlikely that it was truly a case as these persons were inevitable for management of the journey. It remains unclear why these offices were for some reason left out from the list (it does not seem that some part of the record was damaged or lost).
32 FHKA, AHK NÖHA, W 61/A-36, fol. 323–327.
33 See the *footnote 214*.
34 Lanckman, *Diário de viagem*, 52.
35 Rita Costa Gomes, *The Making of a Court Society: Kings and Nobles in Late Medieval Portugal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 65–69.
36 Margarete Köfler and Silvia Caramelle, *Die beiden Frauen des Erzherzogs Sigmund von Österreich-Tirol* (Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 1982), 28.
37 Lanckman, *Diário de viagem*, 54.
38 Unterholzner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 203–204.
39 Christopher Hare, *The High and Puissant Princess Marguerite of Austria* (London: Harper & Brothers, 1907), 66; Fleming, *Juana I.*, 17.
40 Joseph Chmel, ed., *Urkunden, Briefe und Actenstücke zur Geschichte Maximilians I. und seiner Zeit* (Stuttgart: Literarischer Verein, 1845), 134–135.
41 Daniela Unterholzner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza (1472–1510). Herrschaftliche Handlungsspielräume einer Königin vor dem Hintergrund von Hof, Familie und Dynastie' (PhD diss., Leopold–Franzens Universität Innsbruck, 2015), 80.
42 Milanese envoys to Lodovico Sforza, Morbegno, 8 December 1493, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, fol. 51.
43 Gregory Lubkin, *A Renaissance Court: Milan under Galeazzo Maria Sforza* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 59, 62.
44 Pastrnak, 'Flores Italiae', 26.
45 Gorski, *Acta Tomiciana*, 241, 232; Pastrnak, 'Flores Italiae', 25.
46 Quoted in Fößel, *Die Königin*, 88–89, footnote 459.
47 Hofmeisterin: Mary of Hungary—Lady Elisabeth, countess of Sahn; Catherine of Habsburg— countess of Pescini; Eleanor of Habsburg—Lady Susanna from Tobar, baroness, widow; Barbara of Habsburg—Lady of Kunigsegg, born countess of Fürstenberg. FHKA, NÖHA, W 61/A-36, fol. 36; ASMn, Archivio Gonzaga 444, fol. 604; TLA, Pestarchiv, Akten I, 176, fol. 2v; TLA Ferdinandea 23 (not foliated).
48 Unterholzner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 79–80; Michail Bojcov, 'Zum Frauenzimmer am Innsbrucker Hof Erzherzog Sigmunds', in *Der Innsbrucker Hof. Residenz und Höfische Gesellschaft in Tirol vom 15. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. Heinz Noflatscher

and Jan Paul Niederkorn (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2005), 210.

49 Katrin Keller uses a term "mistress of the maids" to translate a title of this office. Keller, 'Ladies-in-Waiting', 81.
50 Keller, 81–83.
51 TLA, HS 5565, p. 29; TLA, Ferdinandea 31, pos. 27, *Beschreybung der Rayss gen Mantua*, fol. 4v.
52 Keller, 'Ladies-in-Waiting', 81.
53 Helene Kottannerin, *The Memoirs of Helene Kottanner (1439–1440)*, ed. Maya Bijvoet Williamson (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1998), 24.
54 Keller, 'Ladies-in-Waiting', 80.
55 TLA, Pestarchiv, Akten I, 176.
56 Hieronymus Megiser, ed., *Annales Carinthiae, pars secunda, das ist ander Theil der Chronicken deß löblichen Ertzhertzogthumbs Khärndten* (Leipzig: Abraham Lamberg, 1612), 1102–1105. About Christoph Ungnad see Constant von Wurzbach, 'Weißenwolf, Christoph', in *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Österreich* (Vienna, 1886), 180.
57 The unpublished diary of the sea leg of Margaret's journey, HHStA, FA 86, file 16, no. 7, here fol. 1r–v].
58 Cole, 'Monarchy in Motion: An Overview of Elizabethan Progresses', 30; Siobhan Keenan, *The Progresses, Processions, and Royal Entries of King Charles I, 1625–1642* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 16.
59 R.J. Knecht, 'Charles V's Journey through France, 1539–40', in *Court Festivals of the European Renaissance: Art, Politics, and Performance*, ed. J. R. Mulryne and Elizabeth Goldring (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 159.
60 ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, fol. 18. Printed in Iván Nagy and Albert Nyári, *Magyar diplomacziai emlékek Mátyás király korából: 1458–1490 [Monuments of Hungarian Diplomacy from the Time of King Matthias]*, vol. 4 (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1878), 27–29.
61 Ibid.
62 Chmel, *Die österreichische Geschichtsforscher*, 2:466–467.
63 Bartolomeo Calco to Lodovico Sforza, Milan, 28 February 1489, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, fol. 17.
64 Bartolomeo Calco to Lodovico Sforza, Milan, 2 April 1489, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, fol. 19.
65 Arcimboldi really did visit Hungary as an ambassador and in 1493–1494 he also accompanied Bianca Maria on her bridal journey. Nicola Raponi, 'ARCIMBOLDI, Guidantonio', in *Dizionario Biografico*, 1961, https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/guidantonio-arcimboldi_(Dizionario-Biografico).
66 Bartolomeo Calco to Lodovico Sforza, Milan, 2 April 1489, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, fol. 19.
67 Ibid.
68 Lubkin, *A Renaissance Court*, 51.
69 Albert Berzeviczy, *Aragoniai Beatrix magyar királyné életére vonatkozó okiratok [Documents related to the Life of Beatrix of Aragon, Queen of Hungary]* (Budapest: Magyar Tud. Akadémia, 1914), 27–29.
70 Iván Nagy and Albert Nyári, *Magyar diplomacziai emlékek Mátyás király korából: 1458–1490 [Monuments of Hungarian Diplomacy from the Time of King Matthias]*, vol. 3 (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1877), 382–385.
71 Margrave Christoph of Baden to Maximilian I, Mals, 15 December 1493. HHStA, Reichskanzlei, Maximiliana 2–2, fol. 91.
72 ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, fol. 66.
73 Pina, *Chronica de El-Rei D. Affonso V*, I:125.
74 Lanckman, *Diário de viagem*, 22–24.

75 Lanckman, 24–26.
76 "...e que não vinham em auto e habitos como cumpria a embaixadores de tamanho Senhor e que tão alto casamento haviam de fazer..." Pina, *Chronica de el-rei D. Affonso V*, I:121.
77 Lanckman, *Diário de viagem*, 28.
78 This report is preserved in the memories of Christoph Ungnad, a Styrian knight, mentioned above. Megiser, *Annales Carinthiae,* 1102. Quoted in Koller, 'Die Verheiratung Eleonores von Portugal', 46.
79 "M. Iacobi Motzii theologi, legati caesarei coram serenissimo Alphonso rege Portugaliae oratio, pro filia eius Lionora Friderico caesari desponsanda", published in Marquardus Freherus, ed., *Germanicarum rerum scriptores aliquot insignes, hactenus incogniti, qui res in Germania & Imperio sub Friderico III. & Maximiiano I. impp. memorabiliter gestas, illo aevo litteris prodiderunt*., vol. 2 (Frankfurt am Main: Typis Wechelianis apud Claudium, 1602), 15–16.
80 Pius II, *Historia austrialis*, 1:147.
81 Koller, 'Die Verheiratung Eleonores von Portugal', 48–49.
82 Wiesflecker, 'Maximilian I. und die habsburgisch-spanischen Heirats- und Bündnisverträge von 1495/96', 16.
83 Chmel, *Urkunden, Briefe und Actenstücke zur Geschichte Maximilians I. und seiner Zeit*, 136.
84 Rausch, *Die burgundische Heirat Maximilians I.*, 175–176.
85 Hermann Wiesflecker, *Kaiser Maximilian I.: das Reich, Österreich und Europa an der Wende zur Neuzeit*, vol. 1 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1971), 130–131.
86 Mulryne, Watanabe-O'Kelly, and Shewring, *Europa Triumphans*, 1:394–395.
87 Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 33.
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4

'HER HIGHNESS WAS GREETED IN EVERY PLACE OF THIS COUNTRY.' FESTIVAL AND CEREMONY

In the previous chapters, we have looked at the material aspects of the bridal journey, the entourage, travel means, and lodgings. But none of these points of view gives an idea about how the journey actually unfolded. How did it proceed? What did everyday life during the voyage look like? As a matter of fact, sources make little or no mention about what the material routine of the day to day on the bridal track might have looked like. If there is no mishap in the form of adverse weather, an ambush of pirates, or another memorable moment, everything we are left with is descriptions of ceremonial and festive events. In that sense, the bridal passage resembles a continuous series of joyous entries to cities, religious rites, banquets, dances, musical and theatrical performances, and various other pastimes.

Naturally, a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century traveller could move without most or any sort of this revelry. A good example is Francesco de' Medici, a husband of Joanna of Habsburg who, after having visited Joanna in Innsbruck and her relatives in Vienna and Munich shortly prior to the wedding, caught up with Joanna's train in Trent and made it to Florence in a third of the time that Joanna had spent on the way. Francesco had left Trent on 21 November 1565 and on 1 December Joanna already addressed a letter to him expressing joy at his safe arrival in Florence; whereas the princess, having departed from Trent just two days after Francesco, reached the outskirts of Florence as late as 8 December, roughly two weeks later.[1] Evidently, the bridal journey could have been much faster, without involving an elaborate sequence of celebrations. So why was it so slow-moving, elaborate, and ostentatious?

One possible explanation that comes to mind is the princess's entourage, a massive group of people, whose movement was inevitably slow and clumsy. Still, as we have seen above, due to residential or meteorological conditions,

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the bridal train could be split and travel separately from the prince or princess. Logistics, clearly, was not the main reason for the protracted progress of the bridal voyage. The following chapter argues that by means of a gradual staging of various public festivals and rites, bridal journeys functioned as a highly choreographed prelude to the wedding celebrations and their inversion in time. In so doing, the marrying dynasties were helped by third-party cities and rulers who did not hesitate to host the prince(ss) transiting their domains with a due amount of magnificence, as will be argued, to accumulate social capital for the future. Travelling with festive occasions was not dissimilar to other types of royal mobility (progresses or *Italienzug*) but the unique character of the nuptial transfer, connecting transnationality, multi-territoriality, dynastic and political meanings, resulted in a special and powerful ceremonial blend that was not limited to the public spectacle but had deep links to the sacrality of monarchical power. This is especially evident when looking at the return journeys of the royal wives to their homeland, Catherine of Habsburg [1553], travelling back to Austria after an unsuccessful marriage with the Sigismund II Augustus of Poland was greeted with no festive splendour.[2]

Furthermore, the studied journeys show steady growth in the frequency of the festive events, so whereas the transfers taking place by the mid-fifteenth century include only a handful of them, the brides/grooms travelling a century after barely took a step without pageants of all kinds. This gradual festivisation was caused by the logistics of travel and the emergence of new source genres, but could also be explained by changes in the court system gradually becoming more stable, and thus shifting the festive locus of splendour to the sort of mobility at hand—the bridal journey.

The ceremonial events, however, were far from non-problematic triumphal processions as portrayed by the festival books, and this chapter brings to light evidence proving that there were times of tension and crisis that propelled the participants to seek refuge in the supernatural, thus revealing an apotropaic function to these ceremonies. The wedding transfer was connected to the sacred sphere in various manners: visiting holy shrines and relics, participating in the liturgy, and even by its very schedule. As the bridal journey and premodern travel in general always exposed people to situations (shipwrecks, illness, bandits or pirates, etc.) that threatened their lives, it was obvious that travellers sought divine protection, especially so if the transfer was imbued with such a political and dynastic significance. However, there was another angle to this as well, since reverence of the holy objects or making small pilgrimages on the way was clearly connected to the spouse's transition to the new status and realm. As many of these acts of piety were often part of coronation, the bridal journey served a prelude to this ceremony not only in logistical but ritual and symbolic value as well. Therefore both aspects, public and sacred ceremony, can hardly be separated. The journey was as a prologue to both wedding and coronation. Stretching the ceremonies and rituals in time and space very much boosted the strength of the monarchical event.

Public festivals and spectacles

Royal tours have attracted the attention of many scholars and by no means only historians. Clifford Geertz, for instance, looked into the progresses of Elizabeth I and by comparing them with Indonesian and Moroccan examples he deemed them to be a continuous campaign of revival of the queen's charisma, defined as one's ability to connect to the core values and collective imagery of society (the so-called "centre"). According to him, the allegorical or pictorial images used during the entries were aimed to put Elizabeth at the heart of the values they represented, and thus to transform the queen into a moral idea, the very "centre" of society.[3] Pivotal historical studies by Roy Strong, on the other hand, recognised the critical role of early modern progresses in shaping and popularising power.[4] Triumphal festivals, rituals, and visual propaganda were key components of performativity of power and politics.[5] Since princely processions and voyages have been often analysed alongside other court festivals[6] it was critical to discern a major source genre for these events—the so-called festival books. Helen Watanabe–O'Kelly, who established a clear definition of these documents, also pointed out their main limitations: being a compound of history and panegyric, these accounts must be handled with a due amount of caution with respect to their dynastic and political goals.[7]

Still, the wedding journeys differ from other tours of early modern monarchs: unlike the full-time sovereigns travelling around their domains, the transfer of the noble bride or groom was a unique, one-way journey, culminating in the event that caused it, that is the princely nuptials. To understand the precise extent of their dissimilarity, we must first outline the meaning of the premodern court festival as a whole. Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly discerns two types: ceremonies (a), which helped to create power structures, and spectacles (b), which served as symbolic representation of such power. According to this distinction, coronations, royal entries, and funerals, for instance, can be classified as ceremonies, while ballets, tournaments, or various sports are forms of court spectacle.[8] In the case of the bridal journeys, their final phase (i.e. arrival and entry of the new queen, her coronation, and nuptial ceremony) is usually considered to be part of the power-construction category of "ceremony" as these rites established the new royal consort and were vital for the preservation of the monarchy and dynasty. The wedding banquets, theatres, and the entire accompanying pageantry simply fall into the area of spectacles that facilitated the interpretation of ceremonies. But what about the festivities taking place during the entire course of the bridal journey? Could they be cathegorised like this?

The two festival books, documenting the journeys of Eleanor [1561] and Joanna [1565], are basically an account of one big triumphal procession, consisting of an almost never-ending sequence of solemn entries, pageants, and entertainments. Prime attention is however given to the entries. This

ceremony, a crucial part of every premodern royal procession and one of the high points of the princely wedding as a highly choreographed event involving many symbolic layers, has been widely studied.[9] Many brilliant studies have concentrated either on the bride's final entry[10] or the entries to particular cities lying on her way. Ceremonies and festivals are arguably the most studied aspect of wedding travel, however much more can still be done in terms of the systematic evaluation of the entire course of the particular journey (that is, not only focusing on one or two cities), comparison of several journeys at once, or confrontation of festival books with other types of documentation.[11]

The ideal royal entry generally, according to G.J. Schenk, consisted of six phases: preparations by the receiving body and the visitor (a); *occursio*—an extramural greeting and invitation to enter the city (b); *ingressus*—entering the city gates (c); *processio*—a procession through the streets to the church (d); *offertorium*—a visit to the main church coupled with a thanksgiving liturgy (e); *Einherberung*—accompanying the visitor to his quarters (f).[12] According to two festival books, Joanna and Eleanor's entries came very close to this classic model at numerous points: upon arriving in the city the local authorities and their military escort usually awaited the princess outside the city borders, greeted and invited her to enter. Somebody from the princess's train answered their invitation, whereupon the entire train entered the city to the sound of cannons and musical instruments, parading the streets adorned with triumphal arches, lanterns, tapestries, textiles, and crests. The procession headed to the main church where the princess was given a cross to kiss and holy water, and the choral *Te Deum laudamus* was chanted. Afterwards, the bridal visitor is ceremoniously—with a military escort and solemn music—led to her lodgings where another welcome delegation, this time mostly consisting of prominent females, awaited her.

Each of the six parts of the entry could have been even more diversified, consisting of several steps. For instance, a threefold scheme of the extramural greeting is visible in Margaret of Parma's entry [1533] to Verona. The illegitimate daughter of Charles V was first greeted six or eight miles outside the city by the four most prominent citizens who offered her accommodation in the city. The second stage, taking place two miles before the city gates, involved a local captain, a bishop, and "the entire youth", who made a speech to the princess, also inviting her to the city. This time, Charles de Croÿ, head of the bridal train and bishop of Tournai, answered on the princess's behalf, expressing thanks for such honours. And finally, one mile before the city Margaret was greeted by the Veronese podestà and local ladies who all dismounted from carriages and made reverence to the eleven-year-old princess, wanting to kiss her hand, but she refused. The account does not specify the liturgy in the church, so the entire ceremony ends with their arrival at the accommodation arranged for the guests.[13] A similar multi-step form of greeting is recorded for Joanna and Barbara of Habsburg [1565] in Trent or Mantua,[14] so there was clearly a trend towards the diversification of welcoming rituals.

In the towns where there was no ceremonial entry, the festival books did not forget to mention the *occursio*–style (the phase *b* of the ideal entry) welcome group of the local representatives. If the princess passed the third party's territory, its representatives ceremoniously greeted her on the borders and accompanied her throughout the entire leg of the journey stretching across their domains. For instance, a Venetian embassy, led by the captain of Verona with sixty horses, was waiting for Joanna [1565] before Rovereto and stayed in her presence up until the Mantuan borders where, in turn, the duke of Mantua's envoys waited for the princess to welcome her with a solemn oration.[15] Even in the absence of a formal welcome, the princess by no means passed by in silence, unrecognised, or lacking even a tiny ray of ceremonial splendour. A strong cannonade from nearby castles followed Joanna's steps throughout the entire county of Tyrol;[16] likewise, Eleanor [1561] was saluted with artillery at every place she passed.[17] This type of honour bears witness to the fact that the festivisation process, discussed in the next subchapter, gradually conquered every blank space of the journey, and from now on, every step of the princess would go down in history. In stark contrast to this, Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452], despite having a massive armada at her side, travelled almost unknown. When arriving close to Marseille or Genoa, the locals did not know them nor were the Portuguese keen to disclose their identity, and when asked, they allegedly only reticently replied: "Peace be between us and you. We are Christians coming from the world's end and with God's help, we wish to see Rome."[18]

A century later, the cities were not only aware of the princess's arrival but also they competed in producing special ways to entertain the prominent bridal traveller on top of the banquets and balls that were almost ubiquitous. In Trent, Joanna [1565] witnessed a two-hour-long mock siege of a wooden castle that was "very nice to watch".[19] During one of three days of rest spent in Mantua, the princess first attended Mass and a subsequent banquet. In the afternoon, she and the cardinals in her retinue went for a "very entertaining" hunt to the adjacent area of Marmirolo where fifteen boars and one fallow deer were caught. Another banquet in the evening was followed by an allegorical *commedia Flaminia* performed by Jews and lasting for five hours.[20] In Bologna, eighteen pages approached Joanna, and Cardinal Borromeo, as a papal legate, knighted them. Subsequently, five small-statured riders competed in a horse race *(palio)*.[21] Various kinds of spectacles and pastimes, albeit far less frequently than presented in the festival books for Joanna and Eleanor, are documented for earlier journeys too. Maximilian I [1477] took part in a water jousting tournament during his stay in Dendermond;[22] for Bianca Maria's visit [1493] to Como

> the most beautiful race of the boats was made. They sailed across the water of Lario [Lake Como] with such speed and ease as if they competed with the winds—a game most widely appreciated and finished with loud applause.[23]

Hospitality was not confined to pageantry but took a very material form as well. Maximilian I [1477] was given three barrels of wine, one bull, and three oxen by the city of Cologne; one barrel of wine, two oxen, and twelve rams by the city of Maastricht; three barrels of wine and two oxen by the city of Diest.[24] The city of Reims presented Margaret of Habsburg [1501] with a collection of venison (deer, boar, roe deer, peacock, partridge, rabbits) and four vessels of hippocras, a sort of mulled wine that was well-suited for that time of year (the beginning of November); the princess received similar gifts in almost every city: in Châlons-en-Champagne (wine, roe deer, peacocks, pheasants, bison veal), Troyes (venison), Bar-sur-Seine (wine), Châtillon-sur-Seine (wine), Dijon (wine), Saint-Jean-de-Losne (wine), Dole (wine, mutton, veal, capons, wild birds, horses fed with oats), Salins-les-Bains (golden goblet), Pontarlier (fatty beef).[25]

In general, solemn entries of medieval rulers to cities were connected with gift-giving from the side of the host, usually after the sovereign took up residence somewhere in the city. Ideally, a delegation of the magistrate would approach the guest on the same day as the arrival occurred—if it was already too late, the matter was postponed until the next day—and with a short speech would present the gift. The offerings in the form of provisions were conferred straight away as they were intended for immediate consumption.[26] In the case of the king's entry, gifts from the urban population were an important part in the entire ceremony of the royal adventus as it was an effective tool for consolidating a relationship between the city and the ruler, creating a mutual obligation between the two.[27]

Material goods offered to the princely grooms and brides, on the other hand, were part of the overall welcome and reception offered to these visitors. This is observable for Maximilian I [1477]: while some Flanders cities supplied him with various commodities, others, such as Brussels or Dendermonde, are recorded to have organised various forms of entertainment instead.[28] We can safely say that both gifts and pastimes were material and immaterial sides of the same coin, that is, paying respect to the distinguished traveller. Aside from providing an honorary reception to an individual, which might have been profitable for the city in the long run as we will see later in the chapter, the richness of the gifts could have become a way in which to vie with rival cities, since, as we know, this was frequently the case during the king's entry.[29] Other cities used gift-giving as a sort of advertisement for their artisanal products, that is, to make the princes/princesses the new customers. Such a case is documented for Anne of Bohemia [1382]: when travelling to England to wed Richard II, she passed through Nuremberg and the magistrate presented her with two goblets, produced in the local jewellery workshops. In later periods, Nuremberg would even establish a permanent repository of precious items for use as presents during princely visits.[30]

The above-shown presents given to Maximilian I [1477] and Margaret [1501] produce evidence that donations in the form of provisions were quite common. This was not true only for urban benefactors—even the third-party

authorities whose territories the bride(groom)s crossed arranged for this form of largesse. The Venetian government, for example, regularly dispatched tens of carts, loaded with various kinds of food, beverages, and refreshments to the place where the Habsburg bride or groom would travel. Besozzi, recording the journey of Maximilian II [1548], remembers:

> In Bussolengo, the prince was presented by those Venetian lords with approximately thirty wagons of confections, cheeses, sausages, tongues, hams, calves, young goats, capons, birds, fish, Malvasia, Moscatello, and other excellent wines, which the next day, he [= Maximilian] let drink to his court, especially Germans, who took care of it all and [drank it] quite quickly and happily with their headpieces, hats and other ad-hoc-prepared utensils.[31]

A similar delivery was prepared for Catherine [1549], Eleanor [1561], Joanna and Barbara of Habsburg [1565] in the Venetian-controlled town of Dolce.[32]

Also in divertissements, the hosts did not hesitate to draw on local customs. For instance, bullfighting games were staged for Maximilian II [1548] in several Iberian cities, such as in Lleida where "the most beautiful hunt of bulls was done, and it was very pleasing to watch these Spaniards going so valiantly with a sword and a cape to attack those robust and angered bulls and wound them without being harmed", as Besozzi, a chronicler of the prince's journey, narrates. Much less pleasing, however, was the *corrida* performed in Zaragoza, which Besozzi describes as "a horrendous and dangerous hunt of wild bulls", or in El Burgo de Osma, where "another dangerous hunt was done, during which a bull broke through a barrier made of massive beams and jumped into the crowd smashing and hurling people around on all sides".[33] The festivals could quickly become lethal and the sources are not quiet about such unfortunate incidents. Fifteen people were stabbed in a tightly packed crowd assembled for Eleanor of Habsburg's nuptials [1561] in Mantua; cannon shots fired for the welcome of Joanna of Habsburg [1565] in Prato killed two men.[34] Cannons also crippled a boy watching Maximilian II's entry [1548] to Cremona, shattering his hand up to the elbow. The latter accident, however, became an occasion for the prince to show his generosity and compassion as he granted the victim an annual life pension of 100 scudi.[35]

However, what the festival books, especially those from Joanna and Eleanor's journeys [1561/1565], leave out are the instances of inconvenience and conflict that would cast a shadow on the splendour of the ceremonies. In the festival book, Joanna's progress is a triumphal procession, flowing smoothly from city to city. Yet the diary of Ferdinand of Bavaria, travelling to Florence a week after the princess, presents a slightly different picture. Besides the shabby accommodation in Dolce in which Joanna and her ladies' court had to sleep on the floor, the Bavarian memoir retells other unfortunate stories. When the future duchess

and her retinue held an after-dinner dance in Bussolengo, some uninvited "local parasites" *(Leckher vom flecken)* came to the hall gates and demanded entry. Having been turned down by the porters, they began to throw punches and rocks through the windows, and allegedly also started to shoot, which created havoc amid the dancing company. The incident was so grave that the local governor from Verona and subsequently the Venetian government (in whose territory Bussolengo belonged) started a thorough investigation into the case, even using torture in order to catch and punish the culprits. Another mishap occurred in a nearby town of Villafranca where a throng of people in the hall where Joanna was having breakfast pushed the princess's stable master whereupon he hit a Venetian page in the face, some say with a stirrup which the stable master held in his hand, so the page's mouth "was quite drooped on one side".[36]

Discord arose also over the order of precedence during the solemn entry to Mantua. Joanna and Barbara, traveling together up until this point, were also supposed to make a joint entrance to the city. However both princesses had their own cardinal—a papal legate in the entourage, and hence each of these prelates had his processional cross. Since there could not be "two crosses but only one [in the procession], one of the legates had to yield his own. But neither of them was willing to do that." Ultimately a compromise was reached according to which Barbara would make an entrance on one day and Joanna on another.[37]

Even the spectacles and entertainments organised by the Mantuan hosts, so favourably described in the festival book, struck a totally different chord amongst the members of Joanna's bridal train according to the Florentine envoy de' Rossi, who relates to his lords that

> these feasts were done with such a small degree of order and disarray that these German lords and knights who accompany Her Highness [=the princess] were very annoyed […] because they were bumped and pushed from the crowd and could not see anything.[38]

Rather than an expression of malicious joy, this affair serves as a cautionary tale because the envoy subsequently advises his lord to take extraordinary measures so that the Germans would leave Florence "satisfattissimi" in every aspect. However, according to the Venetian report, this did not happen either, and the Germans eventually badmouthed the duke of Florence perhaps even more than the duke of Mantua.[39]

Be that as it may, all of these episodes reveal that the festival book describing Joanna's progress keeps out of sight negative and unfavourable aspects of the journey. Moreover, the botched entry to Mantua is outrightly falsified as the two cardinals are portrayed as making a joint solemn entry, and only a hint in the form of Princess Barbara not participating in the entry and waiting for her sister at the stairs of the ducal palace gives the real course of events.[40] In contrast with

other early modern festival books, this account was not printed, and neither its author nor addressee is known. Written in German, the author must have been a member of the bridal train who had good access to the princess, as he is well-informed about everything that happened in her proximity (e.g., he knows who attends private dinners), but on the other hand not well-versed in Latin, as he makes mistakes in transcribing the Latin inscriptions on the triumphal arches.[41] Nothing certain, aside from being a German, can be said about the creator of the festival book describing Eleanor's journey to Mantua [1561] either.[42]

The lack of information about the authors' background makes it harder to understand their real motives; however, the accounts give a clear impression that the princess's passages are glorious undertakings preluding the final triumph; every instance of the voyage is imbued with pomp and magnificence. The objective is obvious: to push the declaration of dynastic grandeur even further, to glorify the union and by extension, the persons and families joining together. One must, however, be careful to deem it a form of propaganda—as John Adamson sharply points out, magnificence and representational display were rather expressions of dynastic self-affirmation, cementing an image which the princely house wanted to identify with and to preserve for posterity.[43] As the festive display also served to affirm social status, it was vital to prolong it for as long as possible. Yet, no matter how long the wedding festivities either at the bride's or groom's home lasted, there were always material limitations (finances, manpower) which dictated that they could not last indefinitely. The seemingly vacant space of the bridal transfer could have been an optimal way of extending the festivities without much pain and effort, especially given the fact the financial burden for staging this extension fell on the local hosts, often not even vassals of the wedding parties: the festival book for Joanna's travel does not forget to mention that the princess and her entire entourage was *costfrei gehalten*.[44] Such versions of events could serve as a blueprint for similar occasions in the future, being a part of an emerging dynastic ceremonial, which in the Habsburg case did not form a single handbook but rather consisted of a vast collection of records from the past.[45]

Festivisation

The solemn entries to cities as a major part of the bridal journey stand out already in the earliest medieval descriptions. The saga describing Christine of Norway's transfer to Castile [1257] states that she was greeted "with such great honours […] whenever she came", but in fact, for only a handful of towns, we do possess more elaborate descriptions of what these "honours" might have looked like. Two miles before Girona, the princess was met by the earl and the bishop with a squadron of three hundred men, probably military. Then the earl led the princess to the city, holding the bridle of her horse.[46] A similar scenario was repeated in Barcelona, Zaragoza, and on the final stop, Valladolid.[47]

Christine's journey somehow resembles the earliest examples from the fifteenth century, although at first the sources are not particularly specific. Eleanor of Scotland [1448] passed many large cities such as Lyon or Geneva; yet no description of ceremonial entry or welcome delegations has survived, apart from the ones sent by her husband to Zurich and Kempten.[48] Maximilian I [1477] and Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] are documented to have made only three entries, but as we can see in Table 4.1 (also visualised in the maps in Appendix 1), the number of ceremonial entries as well as other festivities, such as solemn banquets, hunts, or dances, show a gradual, though not steady growth: Margaret of Habsburg, travelling by the turn of the sixteenth century to Savoy, made an entry to every greater city on the way; the same is recorded for Maximilian II [1548]. Despite a temporary hiatus in the cases of Catherine [1549] and Eleanor of Habsburg [1561], the growing amount of entries continues and reaches its highest point in the voyage of Joanna of Habsburg [1565], who was ceremoniously greeted in almost every other city. Similarly, as time goes by, the bridal travellers received more frequent and more elaborate types of honours, as various forms of entertainment were prepared for their stay.

How can we account for this festivisation of the bridal journeys? Why is there a dearth of festive occasions in the 1450s and an abundance of them in the 1550s? What changed? As John Adamson argues, princely courts became generally more ostentatious by the mid-sixteenth century as a result of adopting more permanent residences, often in the urban environment that provided more opportunities for a rivalry in magnificence.[49] When explaining the connection between courts and celebrations, Helen Watanabe–O'Kelly, on the other hand, put emphasis on political instability: public festivals were supposed to counter uncertainty and to establish firmly in power those rulers whose reign was threatened by the capricious political climate of the sixteenth century. Hence, according to her, there is a direct relationship between the political situation and the number of festivals.[50] Teofilo Ruiz has observed a similar growth in the number and extent of—but all royal, not just wedding-related—festivals in the fourteenth-century Iberia. He does not list one explanation but attributes this festivisation to the combination of various factors, such as the emergence of new dynasties, needing legitimisation through public pageantry, or brutalising of warfare, which prompted the escape to the fantastic world of chivalric pageants and imagery.[51] None of Ruiz's causes can be directly linked the festivisation of bridal journeys, however, also in this case, it is a combination of many factors: route, source situation, the general atmosphere of royal progresses, the end to peripatetic kingship, and the dawn of more precise rules for ceremonies.

The first limiting (or expanding) factor for the gradual staging of the journey is the choice of route. Not every city or town, lying on the princess's track was able to throw a magnificent welcome to her. María Ines Aliverti singled out many prerequisites for a city to do so. These encompassed not only

TABLE 4.1 List of festivities made during bridal journeys (without the final entry)

Princess/prince	*Ceremonious entries*	*Solemn banquets*	*Other festivities*
Eleanor of Scotland (1448)	Lyon?, Geneva?, Fribourg?, Kempten	Fribourg?	–
Eleanor of Portugal (1451/1452)	Ceuta, Pisa	–	–
Maximilian I (1477)	Cologne, Leuven, Brussels	–	Dendermont (water tilting)
Bianca Maria (1493)	Como, Mals, Innsbruck	Innsbruck	Como (boat race)
Joanna of Castile (1496)	Antwerp	–	–
Margaret of Habsburg (1501)	Reims, Châlons-en-Champagne, Arcis-sur-Aube, Troyes, Dijon, Dole	Dole	–
Maximilian II (1548)	Trent, Mantua, Milan, Genoa, Barcelona, Zaragoza, Olivares de Duero	Trent, Mantua, Milan, Genoa, Olivares de Duero	Trent (castle siege), Mantua (hunt), Vigevano (hunt), Barcelona (dances, plays), Lleida (bullfight), Osera de Ebro (bullfight), Zaragoza (dances in costumes, joust, bullfight), Calatayud (bullfight), Almazan (bull and hare hunt), El Burgo de Osma (bullfight)
Catherine of Habsburg (1549)	Trent,?, Villafranca	Trent	–
Eleanor of Habsburg (1561)	Brixen, Trent, Rovereto, Villafranca	Trent	Brixen (dances), Trent (dances)
Joanna of Habsburg (1565)	Brixen, Bolzano, Neumarkt-Egna, Trent, Rovereto, Mantua, Correggio, Bologna, Firenzuola, Cafaggiolo, Prato	Bolzano, Trent, Mantua, Correggio	Bolzano (dances), Trent (dances, fireworks), Mantua (hunt, theatrical performance), Correggio ("dragon" fireworks), Bologna (fireworks, knighting of pages, horse race, dances), Cafaggiolo (skirmish), Poggio a Caiano (roe hunt)

economic resources but also a favourable political system and civic institutions, social structure, artistic production, ceremonial traditions, and many others.[52]

Another cause is the choice of overland versus naval route—the contrast between these two types is obvious in two weddings of Margaret of Habsburg: the first, to Infante John of Spain [1497], was preceded by tumultuous sea travel, lacking any sort of ceremonial splendour, whereas her journey to the second, to Duke Philibert II of Savoy [1501], was paved by numerous solemn entries and pastimes. Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452], too, had little chance to be ceremoniously welcomed: aside from the first meeting with Frederick before the gates of Siena and subsequent entry to the city, she was greeted only in Ceuta and Pisa. For the latter, there are no precise descriptions extant, but the former does provide us with a few details. There was definitely some form of extramural greeting as Lanckman's account, the main source for the journey specifies that a city delegation consisting of local officials, aristocracy, clergy, and commoners went to welcome Eleanor who subsequently entered the city "to the voice of trumpets and pipes", a phrase that may hint at more elaborate festivities taking place. Intriguingly, Lanckman explicitly mentions that approximately thirty persons disembarked and went into the city, while the rest stayed on ships, which means that only a small fraction of Eleanor's bridal train (a mere 1 per cent from a total of some three thousand) took part in the ceremony.[53] Given the particular material realities of the journey (naval route, huge entourage requiring lodgings, etc.) it is understandable that the entire bridal company did not go ashore, nonetheless, thirty persons were still a very small portion of it. All the same, this could be another hint of how different ceremonies were by 1450s in comparison to later travels.

Another reason for festivisation lies in the source basis. The first half of the sixteenth century marks the emergence of official records of festivals, the so-called festival books. The rise of this multi-dimensional genre, combining features of chronicle, panegyric, instructional literature, and genealogy, was precipitated by the invention of printing which enabled the spread of court splendour far beyond its physical ambient; yet it is also true that many festival books remained unpublished and there were early modern courts with a strong festive culture lacking a tradition of festival books.[54] Thus, even though the influence of this source genre should not be overemphasised—as there were clearly festivals without festival books—it had a long-lasting impact on the way we study early modern culture and the bridal journeys: for the pre-1500 unions of Austrian Habsburgs there are no festival books, meticulously relating the progress of rituals on the way; all we are left with is letters of ambassadors or brief chronicle entries. The first festival books are preserved from the weddings of Elizabeth [1543][55] (Figure 4.1) and Catherine of Habsburg [1549][56]; however, the emphasis of both is put mainly on the final entry to Cracow and Mantua respectively, not on the festivities en route. This approach changes with Eleanor [1561][57] and Joanna of Habsburg [1565],[58] whose respective voyages gave rise to two unprinted festival books elaborating on the celebratory aspects of the entire transfer.

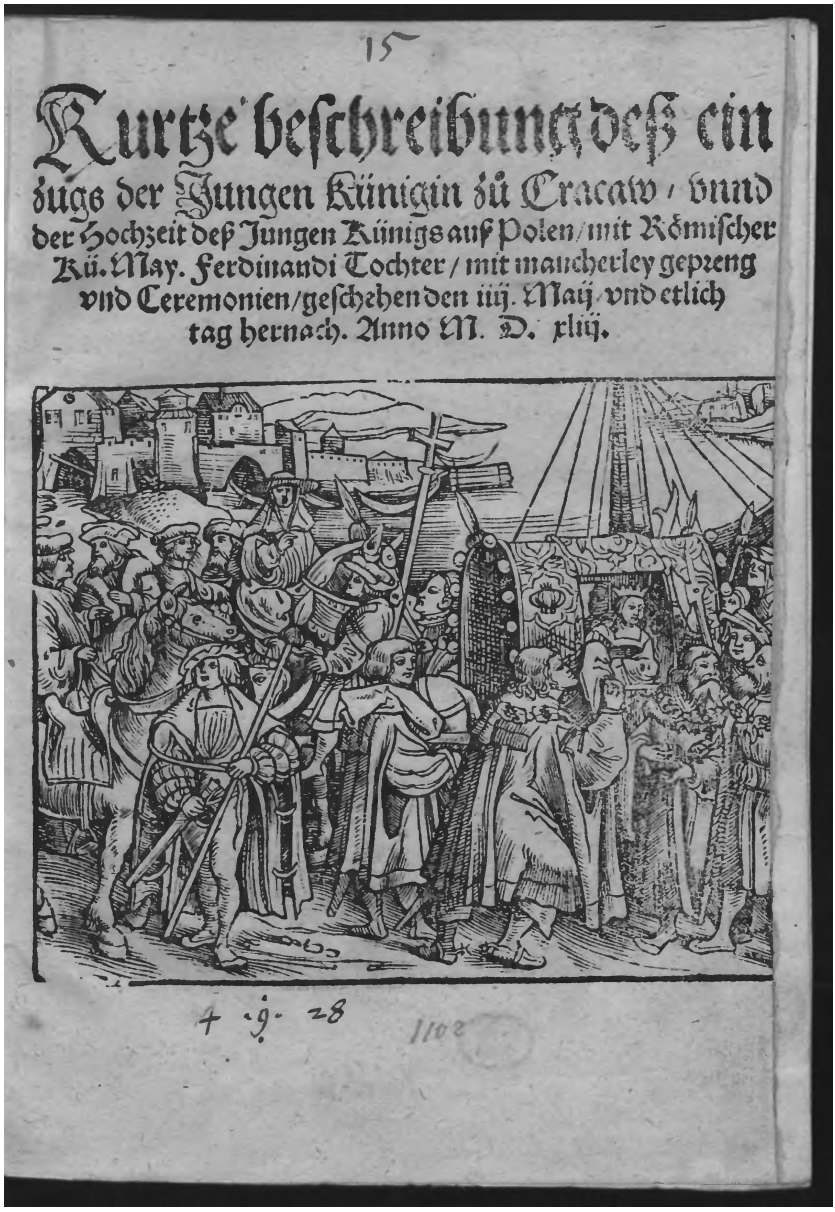

FIGURE 4.1 The frontispiece of the festival book describing the arrival of Elizabeth of Habsburg in Cracow in 1543. *Kurtze beschreibung dess Einzugs der Jungen Künigin zu Cracaw… anno M. D. xliii*. Biblioteca Cyfrowa.

The increasing tendency towards festivisation is thus connected to the development of the festival book as a genre, but this is by no means a sole reason for that—there is no such source extant for Maximilian II [1548], yet Besozzi's chronicle is swarming with festivities of all sorts. The disproportion between the good source base for a particular case and the scope of festivals is easily visible in the journeys of Eleanor of Scotland [1448] and Maximilian I [1477] in which almost all points en route are known but only a handful of ceremonies are documented (see Figure 8.1 and 8.4 in Appendix), but most importantly, in the case of Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] whose transfer is documented—aside from in-detail ambassadorial reports—in Tristano Calco's text *Nuptiae augustae*.[59] This account could well have become a festival book, and in its first part (description of the proxy wedding in Milan) partially is; yet, as the princess leaves her home court, not much is said about the festivities and Calco is forced to change the tone, concentrate on the menial details and fill the blank places with orations.

Hence, festivisation must be explained by other factors. One of them is the interconnection between mobility and power taking place in this period too. On the one hand, the sixteenth century was, as Roy Strong put it, a time of royal tours, and rulers from all around Europe made progresses around their domains in order to consolidate their power, popularise the monarchy's values, or simply to find pleasure and pastimes.[60] Yet rather than stemming from financial motives, i.e. to hand over the expenses needed for holding court to the host, the progress could re-establish bonds between ruler and subjects by providing the latter with direct access to the monarch, as was the case of Elizabeth I in England, who seemed to have a personal inclination towards constant journeying around the country.[61] It was, however, Emperor Charles V, a prototype of the nomadic ruler that allegedly never spent two weeks in the same place,[62] who first began to systematically use festival books as a mass medium, placing himself at the epicentre of the sequence of triumphs.[63] During his victory passage through Italy in 1535/1536 following his successful campaign in Tunis, he was magnificently welcomed in Messina, Naples, Siena, and Florence with a series of awe-inspiring and carefully staged processions combining triumphal arches, allegorical, mythological, and historical statues, and paintings.[64] This imagery, coupled with a revival of classical features and a strong emphasis on the recording of events had an impact on other courts[65] and definitely also on the portrayal of Joanna and Eleanor's bridal journey in the respective festival books discussed above.

On the other hand, this period is characterised by a slow and gradual transition from the peripatetic court to the establishment of more stable residences. Although far from being drastic and abrupt, this shift had serious repercussions on both the outer and inner aspects of the early modern court, such as the number of courtiers, architecture, and space, or relations between the prince and courtiers.[66] Traditionally, this residential court is perceived as a move towards greater centralisation and absolutism, aiming to tame the local aristocracy by

depriving them of their domains and real share of power, but John Adamson and other scholars managed to shake up this model and to offer a more diverse account of events.[67] Nevertheless, the change from an itinerant to a more sedentary kingship might have influenced the festivisation of the bridal journeys as well: as the courts and their splendour started to be restricted to one place, the wedding transfer became a useful option for visualising monarchy outside its usual residential stage. In other words, a greater emphasis on ceremonies during nuptial passages could have been compensation for fixing the ruler and court, which, as a result, hindered its contact with a broader public that had to be reached by printed booklets recounting the course of festivals. Nonetheless, this claim deserves far deeper analysis that would concentrate on the later periods in which both trends (festivisation and stable monarchy) are clearly visible.

The end of the fifteenth century also marks the dawn of more precise rules for ceremonial entries to cities in general, which might have been the last factor contributing to the festivisation. The first papal ceremonial treatise by Agostino Patrizi Piccolomini (1488) set the rules for welcoming a queen. She should be received as any other king or emperor—welcomed with a sumptuous triumphal entry, with a few exceptions: she is not allowed to kiss the pope's face *(osculum oris)*, but only his hands and shoes, nor is she allowed to be seated among the cardinals, but cardinals may accompany her to her chambers. During the liturgy, there should be prepared a special chapel where she could hear the Mass. The queen is prohibited from taking part in the liturgy; however, she is to be specially greeted on the stairs of St. Peter's Basilica, offered a cross to kiss, and after singing a responsory and *Te Deum* she is to be led to the main altar where a prelate should bless her.[68] Besides rank, we can see strongly gendered attitudes that impacted the different treatment of a visiting queen in contrast to a king.

There are no explicit rules for the organisation of the queen's triumphal entry in Patrizi's ceremonial, however, most likely it was similar to the king's entry—the first in the order of entry were non-clerical servants of the cardinals and the papal courtiers, and the secular curial officials. Then a prefect or senator of the city proceeds, accompanied by the imperial envoy, if present. After that, the military squadrons come, followed by the college of cardinals, ranked from bishops to deacons. The king should walk or ride at the end, between two deacons, and after him, two or three of his secretaries. The procession should be concluded by other clerical members of the cortege, ranking from archbishops to abbots.[69] Precedence is given to the papal representatives (college of cardinals), perhaps claiming papal superiority.

Similar rules started to emerge in the other cities as well. The Genoese ceremonial manual from 1568 established a rule for the reception of a queen, duchess, or other lower princess. The queen should be welcomed by the doge who is to bend the knee before her and ride on her right side in the procession, if other queens or princely figures are not present (if so, the doge should ride after them). The minor noble ladies are only to be greeted at the gates

of the city, without dismounting from horses or giving them precedence in the procession. In the case that the princely women were born in the imperial or royal house but wed to a duke or minor prince, they should be treated like queens and not lower princesses.[70] However, even with these meticulous distinctions, issues may have been raised, if, for instance, a visiting noble lady claimed for herself a higher rank than the city of Genoa acknowledged, as in the case of Christina of Denmark (1521–1590) in 1588. The controversy about the way she should have been greeted, based on her merely nominal title, shows that noble status was not something given, but rather constantly negotiated.[71]

The uncertainty and struggles over rank regarding ceremonial rules are attested to in our sample as well. Apart from the already-mentioned precedence conflict between two cardinals before entry to Mantua, one case, the entry of Maximilian II to Barcelona [1548], stands out. As the city magistrates planned for the prince's arrival, there was no agreement on whether he should be greeted with a canopy or not. Despite direct orders from Prince Philip II, the brother of Maximilian's bride and his cousin, the majority of the officials were against the usage of the canopy, claiming that this honour was a prerogative of their sovereign alone. The viceroy of Catalonia failed to persuade the magistrates, reminding them not only of Philip's orders but also of Maximilian's royal rank.[72] A new letter from Philip probably did not arrive in time to enforce his previous order since the pier arranged for the Habsburg's disembarkation lacked a canopy. As Besozzi informs us, this "made Maximilian indignant and [instead of getting off at the prepared platform] he disembarked with other personages on a frigate."[73]

Maximilian had every reason to be resentful: before the journey, he was given the precise protocol, authored by Emperor Charles V, about how he ought to address Italian and Spanish lords based on their rank (for instance, *excelencia* for the duke of Savoy, *senoria* for Venice, *senoria illustrissima* for the dukes of Florence, Mantua, Ferrara, and Urbino, *vos senor* for Spanish viceroys and grand prelates),[74] but when it came to his position, the other side did not treat him properly. Therefore, on one hand, this episode proves the rigidness of Spanish court etiquette,[75] but on another, it also shows deep holes in the—in this period still only emergent—system which was not yet aware of all eventualities.[76] As Maximilian was not a hereditary ruler of the country and his wedding to Infanta Maria was not supposed to make him king, it is understandable that the Barcelona officials found themselves in a precarious position. Given the choice between offending the visitor, no matter how noble, and the crown by attributing a symbol of power to somebody who did not deserve it they opted for the former, which must have seemed safer. The precise guidelines for the reception of a foreign king were established only at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and interestingly, it stipulated that the visitor be honoured with the canopy as a sign of his noble rank, so subsequent developments proved the Barcelona officials wrong.[77]

Hosting a foreign prince(ss)

In general, ceremonial entries created a legal bond between a monarch and their subjects, especially when a king visited the city for the first time after his ascension to power. Acts constituting the ceremony represented and constructed mutual recognition and association.[78] The keys offered to the ruler only to be subsequently handed back were a symbol of mutual relationship, sometimes corroborated by a reciprocal oath with the subjects swearing fealty and the king confirming urban liberties.[79] Naturally, the advent of new royal consort did not have such strong power connotations, but being part of the wider cycle of dynastic ceremonies, constantly renewing power relations within the monarchy,[80] it also aimed at the primary function of solemn entries, though not as directly as the king's advent right after his accession to the throne. This was the case not only for the final entrance as the other cities lying on the princess's route also missed no chance to venerate their new queen. In a way, they were an extension of the grand finale, serving a similar dynastic function, yet at the same time, serving another goal too. As Jullia de la Torre Fazio points out, during Elizabeth of Valois's transfer to Spain [1559] cities like Pamplona, Guadalajara, Alcala, or Madrid welcomed the princess with sumptuous decorations and triumphal arches, that not only paid respect to her, extolling Elizabeth's virtues and pedigree, but also fashioned their urban identity by highlighting, for instance, the ancient traditions or military achievements of a particular city.[81] However, even if arranging a magnificent welcome for the new queen might be seen as obligatory, it was by no means automatic. The already mentioned study by Franca Varallo demonstrated that the aristocrats in Pavia used various strategies, such as claiming illness or poverty to avoid the participation in Margaret of Austria's entry to the city.[82]

Many bridal journeys or their parts could be categorised as honouring new queen or king consort. Maximilian I's magnificent arrival [1477] into Ghent and other Burgundian cities cast the prince, coming with a potent and splendid entourage (although financed by his bride), as protector and saviour of the heterogeneous Burgundian power-conglomerate that faced massive instability after the death of the last Valois duke and an existential war with the king of France. Maximilian I's journey to Flanders raises another interesting point: although his itinerary started in Vienna and passed tens of towns and cities, among them such important ones as Graz or Salzburg, the sequence of triumphal entries only began in Cologne where his entire entourage, consisting of imperial princes' delegations, assembled.[83] Up until this point, he appeared to progress without any "honours". Clearly, this proves that the underlying goal of staging the triumphal journey, that is to foster the spirit of the future subjects and impress them, impacted its final form.

Nevertheless, Elizabeth of Valois and Maximilian I were so lavishly received in the cities belonging to their new dominions, in other words, they were

welcomed by their subjects, so power relations may have accounted for the rationale of the ceremonies. However, what reason had third-party cities to greet ceremoniously a princely bride or groom passing through their territories? As already said, the bridal journey could be used as a sort of free-of-charge and convenient way to prolong the nuptial festivities from the side of the wedding parties. But what was the motivation of the third-party lords to stage a ceremony for a foreign princess or prince?

The general system of hospitality, inherent in the premodern society, has already been mentioned and it can partially explain why cities and towns sought to gain honour and prestige by hosting foreign figures.[84] Another reason might be more down-to-earth: many towns and cities used such visit for urban development. Before Anne of Habsburg's visit [1570] Burgos's magistrate took the opportunity to enlarge squares and city gates, to renovate the walls and city pavements, and to clean the streets and houses.[85] Carmen Ziwes brilliantly showed how different attitudes to the urban reconstruction and renovation, connected with the reception of Marie Antoinette in Freiburg [1770], kindled struggles between the city magistrate and the country government. Despite the magistrate's resistance, the government insisted on carrying out the architectural reforms, seeing the princess's visit as an ideal pretext to do so. As Ziwes explains, their eagerness can be attributed to their political situation: by the late eighteenth century, the local government lost its traditional standing. Throwing the most magnificent feast for the Emperor's daughter could thus have been a way how to win over the Emperor himself.[86] Could currying favour with the bride(groom)'s relative be the reason for the generous reception also in the cities that were bound by feudal ties with them?

Hints for this can be found in the inscriptions on the triumphal arches arranged for a princess's solemn procession. If we compare dedications from three cities in which Eleanor and Joanna [1561/1565] were saluted, as recorded in the two festival books, all of them contain messages that can be subdivided into three main groups, with each of these groups being presented (with one exception) in every city. The first group recognises the princess as a traveller ("Blessed he who comes in the name of the Lord") and wishes her comfort and peace during her sojourn in the city ("May you enter with the right foot", "Auspicious hospitality"). A similar tone is adopted by the *commedia flaminia* performed for Joanna and Barbara in Mantua, which staged (among others) ancient gods, Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, and allegorical figures representing three Italian rivers, Mincio, Po, and Arno, all wishing good luck to the princesses and offering their services.[87] The image of three rivers mostly likely symbolised three power players involved in the festivity, Mincio standing for the Mantuan host, Arno and Po for Florence and Ferrara whose rulers Barbara and Joanna were about to marry, and therefore the coupling of these rivers might express hopes for peace and cooperation between traditional Italian rivals.

Second, some inscriptions address the rationale of the princess's visit, that is, her matrimony, and by utilising quotations from ancient Latin poetry or simple phrases they wish the princess marital harmony ("By the bond of inextricable harmony", "Blessed are souls united in a blessed bond") and fertility ("Long-lasting and fortunate fertility", "The strong are generated by the strong"). The choice of Virgilian verses alluding to the Golden Age, linked with the arrival of a promised child, marks a shift into eschatology, a motif commonly used in Renaissance wedding poetry.

TABLE 4.2 Inscriptions from triumphal arches from three cities ceremoniously welcoming Eleanor and Joanna of Habsburg

City (princess, date)	*Triumphal arch inscription*	*English translation*
Trent (Eleanor 1561)[88]	Adsis dextero pede et fausto sydere	May you enter with the right foot and [under] the auspicious star
	Longa et beata foecunditate	By the long-lasting and fortunate fertility
	Concordiae vinculo inextricabili	By the bond of inextricable harmony
	Christianae concordia[e] instauratoribus	To the restorers of the Christian concord
	Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini[89]	Blessed he who comes in the name of the Lord
Correggio (Joanna 1565)[90]	Di(vae) Joannae di(vi) Ferdinandi imperat(oris) filiae Corrigienses erexerunt	Erected by the people of Correggio for divine Joanna, a daughter of the divine Emperor Ferdinand
	Iam *durae quercus sudabunt roscida mella; Aspice venturo laetentur ut omnia seclo*[91]	Now, *the hard oaks will distil dewy honey;* See how all things rejoice in the age that is at hand
Bologna (Joanna 1565)[92]	Foelices anime felici foedere juncte	Blessed are souls united in a blessed bond
	Foelix coniugium	Blessed marriage
	Omnia nunc florent, nunc Felsina laeta triumphat	Everything is in bloom now, now joyful Bologna is in triumph
	Forte[s] creantur fortibus[93]	*The strong are generated by the strong*
	Chara Deum *soboles Magnam* nostri *Incrementum*[94]	*The offspring dear* to God, [of you], our *big advancement*
	Faustum hospitium	Auspicious hospitality

The last and for our analysis the most interesting group of inscriptions are those more personally targeted at the princess, which try to spell out the mutual relationship, albeit very vaguely. Each of the cities from Table 4.2 identifies the princess within her dynastic context by using expressions involving exalted adjectives ("divine", "dear-to-God") or claiming accomplishments ("To restorers of the Christian concord"), that served as a sort of marmoreal panegyric, designed to extol the House of Habsburg. But in the end this demonstration of deference only stressed other deferences already being paid by the host city. Part of one Bolognese inscription, nonetheless, encapsulates the reason for such honours as it connects the princess's visit with a vague idea of future benefits ("…our big advancement"). The feast-throwing cities clearly seem to have expected something in return for their warm reception.

One brief mention relating to the entrance ceremony of Margaret of Parma [1533] to Verona might corroborate this. After the princess's stay the local officials reported back to the government of Venice that they provided her with "the accommodation in this city since our illustrious *signoria* holds the imperial Majesty in high esteem". The officials probably repeated this rationale to the princess in the course of the extramural greeting since the same letter relates that Margaret, in the words of her translator, expressed gratitude for their good wishes and promised she would remember them and retell them to the emperor, either personally or via correspondence.[95] Apparently the Veronese and ultimately the Venetians used the princess's stay in their territory to curry favour with the emperor. As in this case the sources are not specific about the particular demands or goals that the hosts were pursuing, their approach might be seen as the accumulation of social capital, potentially useful in the future.

This sharply contrasts with the sequence of receptions which Margaret's father, Emperor Charles V experienced during his journey through France in 1539–1540. As the Habsburg's visit marked a turn in Franco-imperial relations after years of fighting, Francis I, the king of France, saw it as a way to strengthen their newly established union and possibly to make Charles yield the duchy of Milan to French rule. These political goals set the tone for the entire passage of the emperor: pageantry and triumphal arches in the cities emphasised the political concord and friendship of the two monarchs, offered biblical blessings for the traveller, and extolled the imperial dynasty. The level of hospitality offered to the emperor, as R. J. Knecht points out, far exceeded the usual standards when welcoming a noble guest, for instance, Charles V was authorised to appoint all vacant offices in the kingdom and pardon prisoners, which were powers reserved to the king himself.[96] In comparison with the motives behind the hospitality offered to the princely brides and grooms thus Charles V's reception seems to have been more politically driven and articulated.

However, this was the not case for all bridal journeys as some could have been quite strikingly impacted by the politics, especially when the political climate was tense. A perfect example is Elizabeth Stuart's journey to Heidelberg [1613],

whose reception in the Low Countries and the Hessen-Kassel territories was quite different. Whereas the States General of the Netherlands threw a truly magnificent welcome, full of pageants and hunting parties, and bore all the costs, the welcome given to the princess further down the road was tepid at best. The Netherlandish opulent reception was a part of the continuing support for Elizabeth's husband, Elector Palatine Frederick, since the United Provinces saw him as a crucial ally in their fight against the Emperor and the Spanish Habsburgs.[97] The same blend of confessional and dynastic links motivated other German princes to solemnly host the Stuart princess. On the other hand, this was not the case for the landgrave of Hessen: despite his dynastic and religious links to Frederick of Palatinate neither he nor his son did not take part in the princess's very limited reception. Most likely, this lukewarm attitude was a result of internal political struggles and personal grudges against the Palatine couple as the landgrave had also sought Elizabeth's hand for his son.[98] The reception and pageantry organised for the travelling brides seems to have been motivated by a combination of the general rule of hospitality, offered to almost every noble traveller, prospects of future political gains, and highly personal motivations.

Sacred ceremonies

Wedding journeys were naturally connected with the sacral sphere, as they usually ended with the coronation ceremony, which was a key element of the sanctity associated with royal power. This transcendental dimension of royal power has bewildered historians for a long time. A fundamental oeuvre on this subject, *Les rois thaumaturges* by Marc Bloch (first published in 1924), formulated the thesis that medieval society associate quasi-priestly character with royal dignity. In other words, in the eyes of medieval people, kings were not ordinary laymen.[99] The anointing of kings during coronations, together with deeply embedded popular imagery, propelled the idea of a sacral character of royal authority. This enabled belief in the healing touch especially efficient for treatment of scrofula, the king's evil of French and English monarchs, which is the primary focus of Bloch's study. The semi-divine nature of monarchical power was highlighted by another keystone work, *The King's Two Bodies* by Ernst Kantorowicz.[100] The king, anointed by God's grace, is a perfect *christo-mimētēs*, an impersonator of Christ, since he possesses two natures, a divine and a human one, with the former referring to the king's office and the latter to his physical individuality.[101] But was the transcendency present even before it, in the course of the transfer? And in what way?

As already briefly shown in the section about travel routes, sacrality had an imminent impact on the schedule of the transfer. For instance, the main points along the journey of Bona Sforza to Poland [1518] were purposely chosen to coincide with the major Christian feasts (Christmas, Easter time) or important dates in the dynastic calendar.[102] This applies for many weddings in our

sample although Eleanor of Portugal and Frederick III [1452] were married (15 March, Wednesday) and crowned (19 March, Sunday) by the pope in Lent, it was around the time of *Laetare* Sunday, which was considered as a joyful break in the period of abstinence and penitence and was connected with the benediction and distribution of the golden rose by the pope.[103] Moreover, their wedding festivities did not occur instantaneously but were postponed until Eastertide (from 9 April on).[104] The same period of the year was marked by the union of John of Castile with Margaret of Habsburg [1497].[105] On the other hand, Christmas was chosen for Margaret's second nuptials [1501] with the Sabaudian duke, as well as for Joanna of Habsburg's [1565] and Bianca Maria Sforza's [1493], although for the last-mentioned princess, the festivities were held off until spring due to delays.[106] The wedding and coronation of Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543] at the Wawel Cathedral in Cracow took place just two days before the feast of St Stanislaus (8 May), the holy patron of Poland whose shrine is located in the centre of the cathedral. Since the saint's feast fell on Tuesday, it is understandable that the royal nuptials and coronation were moved to Sunday which was deemed to be a more festive day. Many coronation ordos demanded the act to take place on Sunday or another holy day;[107] it is thus natural that the similar principle applied to the timetable of the royal wedding as these two rituals were often intertwined. In general, the mobility of premodern princely courts was deeply linked with the liturgical calendar and even more stabilised court developed a sort of micro-mobility, the so-called sacred topography, within the residential circle.[108] Yet this was not the case everywhere—Teofilo Ruiz found out that the liturgical feasts were not particularly linked to royal itineracy in the Iberian monarchy.[109]

Alternatively, the wedding date might have been intentionally chosen to coincide with an important event in the history of the royal house or newlyweds themselves. When the nuptials could not take place at Christmas or at Easter, Guglielmo Gonzaga, duke of Mantua, asked that his bride, Eleanor of Habsburg [1561], would arrive on the day of St George, as this day marked the duke's accession to power. In seeking to fulfil his wish, Guglielmo and his officials did not hesitate to address various figures at the Vienna and Innsbruck courts, even his bride:

> [I heard that] Your Highness [= Eleanor] will make entry to this city on the Saturday after St George and I desire it to be done in another way, on the very day of the feast. It is quite reasonable because on the same day I took possession of this land. […] That is why I beg of Your Highness with all my heart […] to accelerate the arrival in such a manner that the entry would be made on the day of St George….[110]

Unfortunately for the duke, at the time of his request the die had been already cast and Eleanor could not meet the proposed date. Despite its ultimate failure,

the amount of energy spent for this demand points to the fact that the blending of the bridal journey (or more precisely, its final stage) with the dynastic calendar was of utmost importance. Tristano Calco remarked that the first meeting of Bianca Maria Sforza with Maximilian I [1493] occurred on the same liturgical feast (Laetare Sunday) as when the groom's parents met.[111] Although this information is incorrect (on this religious festival Frederick III and Eleanor were crowned, they had actually met for the first time a month before)[112] and it is not stated that the meeting was staged on this day intentionally as a result of Maximilian's wish, it is likely that the notion of importance of this date circulated during the festivities.

A very common feature during the Habsburg bridal voyages are various religious events, such as Masses, and visits to holy shrines. For Maximilian II's journey [1548] there are recorded only three Masses, two in Trent and one in the abbey of Montserrat outside Barcelona, one coinciding with the feast of St Vigilius, a holy patron of Trent, and another with the Assumption of Virgin Mary.[113] On the other hand, Joanna of Habsburg seems to have attended Mass much more frequently—we have it documented in eight out of twenty-four days that she spent on the way.[114] Even before the journey, the Florentine envoy reported to his master that the Habsburg princesses in Innsbruck are extremely religious, as every day they heard three or four Masses in the morning and they prayed the canonical hours throughout the day, allegedly "having the house constantly full of Theatines".[115] Given this pre-wedding daily routine, it is thus highly likely that Joanna started each day with hearing Mass during her bridal journey as well.

Was this behaviour just one of the early manifestations of *pietas Austriaca*, a fervent devoutness typical to the Habsburg house mostly during the Baroque?[116] By no means were Masses a unique feature of Habsburg traveling brides and grooms. Mooring in the port of Grimaud on the Provencal coast on 25 December, a friar had no misgivings in singing Mass for Eleanor of Portugal [1451] and her companions even aboard the ship.[117] Recording the journey to the 1565 Florence wedding, the diary of Ferdinand of Bavaria mentions eight days when the prince heard Mass, the same amount as Joanna. The account also hints at the possibility that the prince actually started every day with attending Mass, since upon departure from Neumarkt-Egna he wanted to go to the holy service but could not find any priest because the mayor of the city was "not very Catholic".[118] Usually having a chaplain in its ranks, the main bridal train would not be affected by the repercussions which nascent Protestantism had on the local clergy, but Ferdinand's smaller retinue depended heavily on priests from the towns it was passing through.

Presence at the liturgy, however, was only one form of religiosity performed during the wedding journeys. When possible, princesses and princes made quick visits and detours to see and venerate holy shrines, relics, and other devotional objects lying on or nearby their route. During her stop in Ceuta, Eleanor of

Portugal [1451/1452] made a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Africa;[119] after arrival at Marseille, many from her entourage wanted to visit the cave of Mary Magdalene.[120] In Genoa, Maximilian II [1548] went to see the "Clainat" in the cathedral, certainly the *Sacro Catino*, an emerald bowl, believed to be a chalice used by Christ at the Last Supper.[121] Joanna of Habsburg [1565] missed almost no chance to interact with the sacred objects: she visited the remains of Simon, *bambino di Trento*, a child allegedly sacrificed by Jews in 1475;[122] she venerated relics of Christ's blood, the holy cross, a piece of the sponge given to Christ on the cross, and remains of St Anselm in Mantua as well as unspecified relics in San Benedetto di Po, and saw and kissed the *Sacra Cintola*, a girdle of the Virgin Mary stored in Prato.[123]

None of the above-quoted instances of devotional practice is accompanied by a commentary expounding the reasons for venerating each relic or attending Mass on a particular date. Therefore we can only speculate on the grounds on which the prince or princess acted in this way. Most of the sites were probably visited out of personal piety or curiosity, either of the princess or her companions, who clearly saw the journey as a chance to explore foreign lands or make a small pilgrimage on the way, as is evident from Eleanor of Portugal's above-quoted stay in Marseille [1451/1452] or Frederick III's envoys who on the way to Portugal visited Santiago de Compostella. Yet certainly the journeys created a window of opportunity for seeking divine grace, sometimes not only by passing holy shrines: the passage of Barbara and Joanna of Habsburg [1565] through Trent and Bologna gave rise to plenary indulgence for all people presented in the particular churches. The papal bulls, granting remissions of 200 days and 40 years in Purgatory for each spot respectively, were read by Carlo Borromeo, a legate who accompanied Joanna at the behest of the pope.[124] Although a proclamation of indulgences was a standard part of the entry of the papal legate into a city,[125] only Trent and Bologna are recorded to have witnessed this privilege which must have been a special courtesy from the side of the pope, alongside the bare act that he sent legates to join both bridal trains (of Joanna and Barbara).

But there could have been other motivations for visiting holy shrines. By the late Middle Ages, the veneration of the *Sacra Cintola*, approached by Joanna in Prato [1565], had become popular, especially among upcoming mothers who sought divine protection during pregnancy and labour by means of the holy object.[126] Did Joanna have this purpose in mind while worshipping this relic? Was she supposed to revere it due to her planned role as mother? The source describing this event provides us with no further details; nevertheless, Joanna would not be a unique princess in approaching a holy object with potential to help her with motherly duties. Travelling to wed William II of Hesse, Yoland of Lorraine [1500] also stopped at a shrine possessing the relic believed to help in pregnancy, the cloak of St. Elizabeth in Marburg. Moreover, St. Elizabeth was an actual ancestor of Yolanda's groom and the Hessian

house used her cult to promote its social status. Visiting such a dynastic shrine would also be the first step of introduction into the sacred circle of the family the princess was about to enter by marriage.[127] In this sense, veneration of relics would be another way the journey visualised the ritual transition of the bride, another means of materialising her new role as mother and wife, and therefore it would be a fundamental part of the ritual level of the journey. Strong evidence for this hypothesis is adoration of the dynastic shrine/saint prior to the princess's departure from home, as documented for Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452],[128] but also known from other medieval cases: Joan of France [1371] before her journey to Aragon visited the dynastic burial place at Saint-Denis and moreover, she was given a special sum to distribute to various churches around Paris; Margaret of York [1468], leaving England, made a small pilgrimage to the shrine of Thomas Becket.[129] On the other hand, pilgrimages to the kingdom's holy patron and other devotional acts (e.g. fasting) were part of coronation rites,[130] which again points to the fact that the bridal journey had no less sacral meaning.

Religious acts could even have been connected with the more material side of the journey as well. It seems that Maximilian II's visit [1548] and subsequent attendance at Mass in the monastery of Montserrat was motivated by a quartan fever, a type of malaria, the prince contracted after leaving Barcelona.[131] In the midst of a severe sea storm, Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452] and her closest advisors pledged to send at their expense two persons to make a pilgrimage to Santiago, and as a result of their vow "the storm and wind calmed down".[132] Both cases show that religiosity was used as a means to ensure the smooth progress of the journey, endangered by natural forces or mishaps.

An indisposition caused by travel was not uncommon, for instance, Joanna [1565] suffered from catarrh and headache prior to her final advent to Florence.[133] What is stunning about Maximilian II's sickness is not the fact it happened but why it happened, at least according to the reasoning of his companions. The prince alone, judging from his sparse correspondence, attributed the disease to a turbulent sea voyage, impacted by a strong wind.[134] His attendants blamed the different climate of the Iberian peninsula but there were some, as Besozzi recounts, who doubted this and

> considered the main reason to be the fact that during disembarkment from the navy His Majesty was not received with such solemnity as was due to his dignity and rank, according to the fashion in which it was done in all the cities he had passed in Italy.[135]

According to them, the inadequate reception in Barcelona, when the officials did not greet the prince with a canopy, was a cause of Maximilian's indisposition.

This comment suggests that the premodern mindset linked the seemingly (at least for the modern eyes) futile and superficial ceremonies with an almost

magical meaning. Did both religious and ceremonial acts in the course of the wedding transfer have an apotropaic function, serving to ward off evil and usher in good luck, necessary for the next period of their lives? For sacral means, such a use is understandable, given the level of peril lying in every premodern transfer. The court's piety in general had talismanic traits,[136] aiming to ascertain divine protection, but the apotropaic level in which the episode about Maximilian's botched entry points to a deeper layer of meaning to early modern ceremonies. Aside from the sacral-religious dimension, this quasi-magical function might go back to the ritualistic roots of the wedding transfer and the concept of liminality, addressed in the following chapter. From the perspective of Maximilian's fellows, ceremonial protocol—"public ceremony"—also equated to good omens, assuring protection and a safe course of events. A tiny bit of ceremonial inaccuracy could put the whole journey into jeopardy, or even, endanger the bride(groom)s themselves. This narrative is not very visible in the sources but we can catch a rare glimpse which shows that at least for some contemporaries it was very much actual.

In conclusion, in the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, bridal journeys began to be more ceremonial and this trend towards greater festivisation can be explained by the emergence of a new medium of recording, by the influence of other royal progresses, or by the gradual transition from a peripatetic to a residential model of princely courts. Festival books carefully crafted an image of the wedding passage as one continuous stream of triumphs, and thus cast it as a protracted prelude to the nuptial festivities, often paid by the third-party cities and princes who saw the visit of the noble groom/bride as a means to build useful social links for the future. Conflicts and moments of crisis, excluded from the glorious-style narrative of the festival books, were by no means rare but ultimately, bear witness to the degree of effort which premodern society expended in getting these acts right, in order to not only fulfil the ceremonial rules or to propel dynastic self-affirmations but also to guarantee semi-magical protection for the bridal traveller. This was further supported by invoking sacral means that played an irreplaceable role during the nuptial transfer. Blending the Church calendar with the wedding timetable, small pilgrimages, participation in liturgy, indulgences—all of this point to the fact that these journeys were supposed to be a blessed time for the newlyweds, families, dynasties, and everybody involved. Moreover, there existed a notion that protection or safe passage could have been achieved by proper execution of the "public" ceremonies too. The botched first reception of the incoming prince might have been the source of evil and physical harm. Or at least some people believed so. If that was the case, magnificence and triumph, omnipresent during the nuptial travel, were not only the utterance of social rank and power but it had a magical character as well. In Montesquieu's words, with which Marc Bloch starts his book, "this king"—in our case the journey—"is a great magician".

Notes

1 TLA HS 5565, 6 and 35; Joanna's letter to Francesco from Correggio in ASFi, MdP 5926, fol. 78.
2 Walter Pillich, 'Königin Katharina von Polen in Linz', in *Historisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Linz 1966*, ed. Archiv der Stadt Linz (Linz: Archiv der Stadt Linz, 1967), 173.
3 Chapter 'Centers, Kings, and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power' in *Local Knowledge. Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*, ed. Clifford Geertz (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 121–146.
4 Roy Strong, *Art and Power: Renaissance Festivals, 1450–1650* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1984).
5 Dustin M. Neighbors, 'The Performativity of Female Power and Public Participation through Elizabethan Royal Progresses', *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies* 18, no. 1 (2022): 119.
6 It would take several chapters to summarise the entire massive scholarship on the court and civic festivals across entire early modern Europe, looking into numerous aspects of the festivities, such as the revival of classical imagery, visual arts, music, or theatre. The most influential collections of studies: Mulryne, Watanabe-O'Kelly, and Shewring, *Europa Triumphans*; Mulryne and Goldring, *Court Festivals*; J. R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewring, *Italian Renaissance Festivals and Their European Influence* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1992).
7 Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'The Early Modern Festival Book'.
8 Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'Early Modern European Festivals—Politics and Performance, Event and Record', in *Court Festivals of the European Renaissance: Art, Politics, and Performance*, ed. J. R. Mulryne and Elizabeth Goldring (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 15–16; Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'The Early Modern Festival Book', 5–6.
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5

"FORGET YOUR PEOPLE AND YOUR FATHER'S HOUSE!" RITUAL TRANSITION

The previous section looked into the ceremonies, both public and religious, which can be labelled as a stream of big monarchical and dynastic feasts. Given the unique character for the life of a particular prince(ss) and realm, these nuptial celebrations indulged in extraordinary panache for which the journey was an ideal conveyor. However, besides these rites, taking place at a macro level, there was also a micro level: the ritual transition which from an anthropological point of view occurs in every marriage. The bridal journey, many times stretching across the continent, was a perfect way how to visualise this passage in an actual physical movement. This rite of passage is an exceptional feature, distinguishing the nuptial transfer from other types of royal mobility in the premodern era. The following chapter delves into modes that facilitated the princess's detachment from the old authority of father to the new one of husband, from the old environment to the new one.

As a result, this chapter addresses the two edges of the transition, that is the separation and inclusion. Both these stages are marked by various encounters and their inversions, i.e. farewells, the most prominent of which are with the parents (or other relatives) and the new husband and his kin. Furthermore, it also analyses ways of staging the first meeting within the wider perspective of the bride/groom's integration, along with its counterpart—the separation from the native milieu. As it will be argued, these processes were not instantaneous but gradual, not necessarily even ending with the wedding.

The crossing of symbolic borders, present in wedding rites, was the backbone of Christiane Coester's often-quoted study.[1] In her thought-provoking work that examines the genesis of queens in early modern France and Poland, Katarzyna Kosior also brings attention to the nuptial transition.[2] By scrutinising rituals and the order of ceremonies, connected with royal weddings, Kosior argues that the

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rite of passage enabled the projection of (often manifold) dynastic identities as well as emotions and anxieties that were by no means staged. These works as well as this chapter draw upon the anthropological work of Arnold van Gennep, according to whom the nuptial rites (like other rites of passage) represent rituals of incorporation that are preceded by rituals of separations and the time of liminality. Gennep discerns symbolic acts associated with these events in various cultures across the globe. Destroying toys or other childhood items was meant to demonstrate a breaking-off from the native family and the age of immature; however, exchange of gifts or sharing a common meal was supposed to facilitate the union of two individuals.[3] However, how were these rites performed in the case of not ordinary nuptials? How did princesses, daughters, and soon-to-be wives of kings cross this symbolic border? How did they leave their native family and enter the new one? And was it only a family matter or a state one as well? Were these rites set in stone or agreed upon on-site, taking into account various local customs? And was the process the same for travelling grooms?

This chapter attempts a close inspection of integration and separation of medieval and early modern princely spouses on a transnational comparative scale. First, the farewell to the native dynasty and a broader range of acts that were meant to alleviate the disconnection of the bride are addressed, demonstrating that rather than a solitary event (an emotional valediction) this was a continuous series of steps. The same applies to the second part of this chapter, the first meeting with the spouse and the unifying rituals. Especially for the segregative rites, the analysis relies heavily on Eleanor of Portugal's [1451/1452] voyage, as this case presents an unprecedentedly well-documented account of farewell ceremonies but also other examples juxtaposed with Carafa's ideal scenario are employed. The section also sheds light on gender differences and demonstrates that the travelling grooms, even though not passing from one male authority to another, participated partially in the process which was caused by political-propagandistic needs. As such, this chapter thus problematises the anthropological concept of nuptial transition and points to this organic character of this rite which was often a result of the compromise between actors with different cultural backgrounds.

Farewell and separation

Unlike the first meetings of the princely newlyweds, in-detail descriptions of the farewell rites are much rarer. In the studied sample of wedding, the most elaborate account of the separation rites is to be found for Eleanor of Portugal's [1451/1452] departure from Lisbon. The princess was led by King Afonso, her brother, with great solemnity to the Sé (the city cathedral) where a solemn pontifical Mass was sung. Unfortunately, the sermon is not extant but according to the summarising chronicle's report, the bishop addressed the departure by adding words of comfort for Eleanor.[4] Having finished the Mass, the bishop said many prayers for a prosperous journey by sea and land, and then, made

a benediction over the princess. Unfortunately, we do not possess the liturgical ordo, prescribing prayers for this occasion but most likely it copied the rites for departing travellers,[5] mixed, perhaps, with a prayer for blissful marriage. As the solemn procession, consisting of the princess, members of the royal family, and aristocracy, was coming out of the Sé,

> Eleanor turned to the cross, fell on her knees—almost as if she were prostrated on the ground—and entrusted herself to the God and to the Passion of the Lord Jesus Christ. And having received permission by Saint Vincent, a holy patron [of the cathedral], under whose protection she was born and baptised, she crossed the doorstep with the queen [her sister-in-law] who accompanied her outside of the city, although being pregnant and close to giving birth.[6]

With a high level of certainty, the gesture performed by Eleanor, for which Lanckman could not find a fitting name, can be identified as *genuflexio proclivis*, an interstage between prostration and genuflexion during which the body rests on the knees, while the upper part is inclined forwards, with the head sometimes touching the ground. Along with genuine prostration (i.e. lying on the ground), this posture was associated with veneration and obeisance towards a figure with a transcendental aura (God, kings) in its most radical, albeit positive form.[7] By enacting such an exaggerated pose, the princess was highlighting the bond with the saint that was about to be broken, and at the same time it was understood as a necessary step for obtaining the authorisation of the divine power to leave. One can draw analogy to the sacrificial offer of coins to *Lares Familiares* which the bride in ancient Rome was supposed to make.[8] Both cases represent a typical feature of separation rites that often involved emancipation from the family's deities.[9]

The procession then paraded through the entire city to the port where a *karraca* ship was already moored. Eleanor together with her family members, ladies' court, and Frederick's orators boarded the ship and had a common dinner. The actual departure, however, did not take place immediately afterwards but almost half a month later: the solemn boarding of the ship took place on October 25, while the actual departure from the city occurred on November 12! The span of several weeks was used for getting other naval vessels ready and loading them with necessary supplies. Yet quite surprisingly the princess stayed aboard over the entire course of this time and "every day, the lord king with her sisters would visit the lady bride for [the giving of] consolation".[10]

As soon as all the ships were fully prepared, the king and his counsellors came anew to Eleanor and

> … called all captains, soldiers and men-at-arms, officials and leaders of ships to make again the pledge to serve bravely and faithfully, and if

> necessary, to give their lives. Then, he ordered all captains and soldiers to obey under penalty of death the lord marquis of Valença, the commander of this expedition on sea and land.

Having received the oath from the retinue members, the king led many talks with Frederick's envoys, entrusting them with his sister and wishing them the best. At the end, the king embraced the ambassadors "as it was usual" (*more solito*).[11]

However, not even this marked the conclusion of the farewell rites. On November 4, Eleanor, her ladies' court, Frederick's envoys, and a few other unspecified persons, boarded a larger boat and sailed to the chapel of a certain hermit.[12] The point of this short trip was not dissimilar from the pompous rites taking place several weeks before in the Lisbon cathedral, although this time it had a slightly more private edge. The hermit heard Eleanor and her companions' confession, whereupon Mass was sung and the Eucharist served. After these devotional acts, the princess entrusted (*commendauit*) herself and her entourage to the hermit with "gifts and offerings", meaning she asked for his prayers during the perilous voyage she was about to make. However, not everything revolved around spiritual matters, as the day was not completed until Eleanor made a serving of confections (*prelibacionem de zukaro*) and "small fish with bread" (*pisciculis cum pane*), probably a mix of dessert with an anchovy-style hors d'oeuvre, as the main banquet took place later on at Eleanor's main ship mooring in the Lisbon port.

The next morning (November 5), a priest carrying the Eucharist in a vessel hung on his neck came aboard the princess's *karraca* and recited a shortened Mass (*missa sicca*), giving everybody benediction. We do not know the point of this liturgy since it was neither a holiday nor Sunday; most likely it had been anticipated that they would finally set off, but the weather conditions must have changed because only on November 12 were the anchors raised and all the ships left port "with a good wind and hoisted sails". The king sailed out on his own vessel as well, accompanying his sister for three or four miles and even bidding her farewell from afar with certain signs (*a longe certis signis ualedicens eam*).[13] Unfortunately, Lanckman is not more detailed about the character of these signs, whether these were visual (and if so, what sort of visual? a flag?) or acoustic.

Be that as it may, Eleanor's valediction was a convoluted process, consisting of at least three farewells:

a spiritual: the solemn ceremony in the cathedral, pilgrimage to the hermit, Mass onboard;
b dynastic–political: receiving an oath of loyalty aboard Eleanor's ship;
c familial: final departure and escorting the princess for several kilometres.

Although Lanckman provides us with this well-detailed account, it raises more questions than it answers. Why was the farewell diversified in such a way? Was it intentional or the result of accident? Why did Eleanor have to be confined to her ship cabin instead of waiting in the royal residence until everything would be ready? Why did the solemn farewell rites not take place on the day of the actual departure?

Adverse meteorological conditions, like storms or absence of wind, can account for the delay between the first official farewell in the cathedral and the reception of the oath. It is indeed the explanation given by another narrative source, the chronicle of Rui de Pina.[14] Yet the usually well-informed Lanckman makes no mention of this sort of hindrance; on the contrary, his report gives the impression that the leaving procedure unfolds according to a plan: he openly admits that the logistical preparations continued even after the princess took up residence on her ship. Arguably, the inauspicious weather might explain only the discrepancy between the second farewell (the reception of the oath) and the departure, since the ceremonies and gestures exchanged at this instance point to the fact that this was the intended date of departure.

In order to understand the entire course of events, one has to look at what preceded them. Starting on October 13, there was an incessant sequence of sumptuous public celebrations, such as triumphal parades, tournaments and hunts, dances and theatrical performances, and banquets.[15] Imbued with extravagance and opulence, these unusually elaborate festivities were not only to subscribe the first union of a Portuguese royal with the emperor but also to heal the wounds of the kingdom after public unrest.[16] The pontifical service on the October 25, coupled with the blessing for the journey and farewell rites, could be thus deemed as a highpoint of these festivities that were a sort of valediction as well. The elaborate character of these public pageants points to the fact that they must have planned well in advance, which probably hindered changes in respect to the material planning of Eleanor's bridal armada, and thus it prevented a successful synchronising between the ceremony and logistics of leaving.

Alternatively, it is likely that everything was unfolding in a more disorganised way than it seems, since Frederick's ambassadors raised the issue of Eleanor's departure only two months before it, pressing the king to dispatch the princess before winter. A lack of further details prevents us from getting the full picture but it appears that the Portuguese did not want to rush and expected the princess to depart the next year, which would naturally have thwarted Frederick's design for him and his spouse to meet on the way to Rome. The prolonged departure could be the result of a rushed preparatory process that did not plan the choreography of the separation rites correctly.

Still, the fact that Eleanor resided for approximately three weeks in relatively austere conditions on the ship remains astonishing. This conundrum suggests that those conditions might have not been austere at all, or—more

likely—that the ritual of separation from the paternal threshold performed in the cathedral was regarded as binding to such an extent that it impeded Eleanor to set foot on her native soil again. Returning to the palace after taking leave of Saint Vincent, the holy patron of the city, might have made the impression of trespassing and offending the good will of the divine. Eleanor, however, did step onto Portuguese territory during her visit to the hermit. This low-key pilgrimage-style trip happened after the second farewell (the reception of the oath) when all material planning was over and the company was ready to set off. At this point, the only thing hampering the departure was weather and that is why Eleanor's one-day excursion—as well as the *missa sicca* a day after—might have been a sort of intercession for the good winds. That would explain why these religious events occurred in a vacuum of important Church holidays and in (on the surface) no relation to the actual departure. Finally, it is not beyond imagination that many of these events (residing on the ship, making a short pilgrimage) were motivated by Eleanor herself, who took a very active role during the journey, as we will see later on.

Be that as it may, Lanckman's account bears witness to the fact that the farewell rites were divided into several phases; they involved the highest Church dignitaries and ceremonies (bishop, liturgy in the cathedral) as well as lower clergymen (the hermit, the priest officiating *missa sicca* aboard), plus the secular power in the form of the king demanding the oath of loyalty from the bridal entourage and entrusting his sister to the ambassadors' hands. At the same time, the princess appears to have taken (or the protocol instructed her?) a very active role in these rites as she personally asked the holy patron of the city for permission to leave, she partook in devotional acts (confession, offerings) in the hermitage, and she even threw little banquets. From her point of view, the farewell had three layers: first, there was an official dynastic-state dimension to this (rites in the cathedral and subsequent solemn procession); second, a legal one as the king handed her over to Frederick's envoys, and hence her male authority was transferred from the brother (since her father was deceased) to the husband. Lastly, there was a personal layer, which, unlike the former two aspects, puts Eleanor into a very dynamic position, as she committedly participated in the official state cult as well as conducted a very personalised spiritual preparation.

Although we miss any clear evidence from the studied corpus of weddings that these forms of farewell rites were a wider contemporary standard, there are hints in the departures of other fifteenth-century princesses. Almost identical to Eleanor's, the parting ceremony of Isabel of Portugal [1429] also staged public festivities (banquet, jousts), a solemn Mass in the Lisbon cathedral, and joyous procession through the city. Having been escorted aboard a ship, the princess had to wait several days to set out, being visited by her father and brothers in the meantime.[17] Furthermore, the account of the day specifies that Isabel too had to stay inside the vessel for several days, "waiting for the disposition and

preparation of other ships and people that were meant to go with her".[18] In light of this, Eleanor's farewell appears to be based on a Portuguese precedent, if not on a general medieval practice: Margaret of York [1468] was seen off with a parade, church service, and a pilgrimage to the shrine of St Thomas Becket in Canterbury.[19]

Despite the quantity of steps documented in Eleanor's departing process, one element is not very dominant—a personal goodbye to the family, which is perceptible in other cases and is tackled by Carafa's manual for the journey too. The escort for a small leg of the journey, as occurred during Eleanor's parting, probably had these connotations, but the senior Neapolitan courtier advises a much more expressive valediction. The princess leaving her parents ought to

> […] deliver an oration before your lord father, in which You will express your immense *(immortales)* thanks to him for all things that his fatherly liberality has granted you. Secondly, most arduously implore him to remember You as often as possible, for Your own sake and also to make everybody understand how much he loves You. Then, [beg of him] to mercifully forgive You, if, perhaps, you have hurt His Majesty in word or deed. Lay the blame [for your offence] on the ignorance of the youth age that is prone to errors and falls. In addition, fall on Your knees and ask him to give You blessing—as we would say as Christians—to give you benediction. Do not ask for it without bending the knees.[20]

Therefore, according to *De institutione*, the separation rites from the princess's side almost resemble the sacrament of confession, however not to God but to her father as main authority she is about to leave. The speech of the princess was supposed to consist of three parts: thanksgiving for fatherly generosity, begging forgiveness for past misdeeds, and asking for the father's good graces in the future. Having almost a religious dimension, this profession points to the relationship between father and daughter, where the former seems to play a semi-godly figure that is not only able to forgive sins but more importantly gives his blessing if asked for by the genuflected daughter.

Nonetheless, there is a second stage to this ritual as well. Carafa also presumes that the father would accompany the princess for some distance after setting off. At the final point of farewell, this time outside of the court setting, the confessional act has to be repeated. Again, the princess should not only plead for benediction but also add physical gestures: she is expected to kiss the father's hands and feet and to shed tears.[21] Both these actions were a clear expression of reverence; however, what is interesting—one might say, almost un-medieval—about Carafa's counsel is the insertion of verbal elements. The Middle Ages generally prioritised physicality over orality,[22] so the reinforcement of gestures with speeches, suggested by *De institutione*, points to a special significance of the rite.

In sketching out these counsels for Beatrice of Aragon, Carafa probably looked for inspiration in the events taking place a few years before. When leaving Naples to meet her husband, Eleanor [1473], Beatrice's elder sister and soon-to-be duchess of Ferrara, "was dismissed with tears of joy by her lord father and all her illustrious brothers", but her father, King Ferrante, accompanied her for two days of the journey, up to the river Garigliano. Here, "at the separation and departure of the daughter from the father, the hearts of both were moved and weeping was renewed. Not only these two [cried] but also all others standing nearby and accompanying [them]".[23] The case of this Aragonese princess, reverberated in Carafa's writing, casts the separation of the bride as a solely daughter-father event, as if this relationship were a metaphor for the whole of the princess's binding with the native milieu. Other people are reduced to the background, while the two central figures engage in the act of dissolving their bond. In Eleanor of Aragon's above-cited example, it has the form of crying and weeping, while in Carafa's instruction it is the formal speech and gestures of reverence.

The reduction of the separation rites that were part of the dynastic nuptials to the father-daughter theme cannot be taken as solely an expression of some special emotional relationship between these two. Quite the contrary, it is an inversion of the bride and groom's dynamic, naturally not in romantic terms but in ritualistic and legal ones. In the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century monarchic setting, the father persona cannot be understood in the modern parental role—the father of the princely bride was also a sovereign and head of the dynastic clan, wielding absolute power over his subordinates, in this case his daughter. The appreciative speech recommended by Diomede Carafa can be thus seen not only as an expression of the princess's personal affection but also as a formal break with her native community, represented by its head—the father. It is an exchange of male authorities, the father is replaced by the husband, and as we will see the rituals of the first encounter between bride and groom will be analogous to the rites of separation.

Aside from Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452] and Carafa, the sources from other weddings are not particularly specific about farewell traditions. Typically, two features of the valediction are extant: weeping and accompanying. With regard to the weeping, special caution is needed: though it might have been a sign of personal affection or grief over leaving "dear ones", there are hints that this behaviour and its rendition in sources were far more complex. After a joint voyage up to Trent, Barbara and Joanna of Habsburg [1565] bade farewell to one other (ultimately, however, they met again for a brief period of time in Mantua). As the former was leaving, the Florentine ambassador Sigismondo de' Rossi noticed that "even though she [= Joanna] had wept over her sister's parting, nonetheless it seems to me that she is much more cheerful now than [when her sister was] in her company".[24] Also Carafa's instruction "to not forget to shed a tear" sounds enigmatic. If weeping was a sign of spontaneous sorrow or

other passion, one might ask why it was necessary to advise it? His advice points to the existence of the prescribed behaviour, expected at these moments. Paradoxically enough, we have no record saying that Beatrice of Aragon—Carafa's addressee—shed a tear when leaving her natal court. The chronicler describing it only vaguely states that she left Naples "with great triumph, in pleasant and merry way *(iocunditate et gaudio)*, mixed with tears and grief".[25] Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452], who is described by scholars to come from loving and caring family,[26] is a similar case: Lanckman records that all people cried during the farewell service in the cathedral and subsequent procession through the Lisbon streets, but the personal grief-stricken goodbye with the king, her brother, or other siblings is completely missing.[27]

How should thus one access such emotional scenes? When discussing the seventeenth-century princely nuptials as depicted by festival books, Helen Watanabe O'Kelly refutes to associate these emotions with some personal sensitivity. Instead, she argues that the scenes of grief and sorrow served as a means to humanise the royal family in the eyes of their subjects and to cast the princess as a compassionate lady, suffering pain and thus empathising with their people.[28] It can be also argued that the inflated scenes of sorrow and misery at the bride's departure were probably heavily inspired by a literary tradition of the *deductio* scheme, discussed in Chapter 7. Kosior, however, advises caution and does not rule out the personal element. She does not deny the existence of the protocol that dictated to behave emotionally at the farewell. However, according to her, the staged conventions were only an upper layer, covering the genuine feelings of the brides and their families.[29]

In evaluating these scenes of sorrow—or their absence—during the bride's departure one must take into account many factors. The genre of the source is definitely one of them. Undeniably, the official accounts, such as festival books, chronicles, or panegyrics, tend to present the dramatic spectacle, either to boost literary effect or public perception of the royalty, as Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly suggested. Other types of evidence, such as ambassadorial correspondence, might have followed other agenda. That can be an explanation why the Florentine envoy de' Rossi, in order to please his master, writes that the upcoming princess of Florence does not show any regret of leaving her sister or home in general, but instead, she is looking forward to seeing her new family. Carafa, as Beatrice's former tutor and one of the closest persons to her father, clearly advises her to show godlike respect towards the father. The audience and motive definitely had an impact on both the actual and written rendition of the event.

However, all these models operate on the assumption that there was a written or unwritten protocol prescribing the bride and her relatives to indulge in an expression of emotions. Again, comparing a larger corpus of pan-European weddings shows that this was not automatic. This is where Kosior's observations are particularly valuable, although one might push her points even further: to

question the very existence of the binding etiquette or at least, its consistency throughout medieval and early modern Europe. According to the diary of Jean Héroard, personal doctor of King Louis XIII of France, the king and his sister Elizabeth of Bourbon [1615] hardly separated:

> […] tears, sobs, sighs, cries mixed with kisses and embraces to such an extent that they [Louis and Elizabeth] could not be separated. Everyone did the same, moved by the tears of the young princely siblings, except for don Iñigo de Calderón, Spanish ambassador, who had negotiated the marriage. He watched them with a dry eye and trying to put an end to these cuddles, he shouted in high and powerful voice: 'Let us go, let us go, princess of Spain!'[30]

For the Spanish ambassador, such an emotional farewell was unacceptable and not suitable for the comportment of the new queen of Spain. Another episode, from the farewell of Maria of Guimarães [1565], shows the ambivalence and ambiguity of the feelings:

> […] in the last embraces, one could to see two things that are quite contrary in human happiness: laughter and tears. Some people, such as the bride, had greatest joy, while the others […] cried out of tenderness because of her departure. Especially Infanta Isabella, her mother [cried], who particularly loved this daughter of hers, not because it is her daughter, but because she [Maria, the bride] is a lady of high valour, virtuous, kind, [educated] in fine Latin literature, of high intelligence, [knowing] many languages, so well-raised by her [Isabella], and has no match in manners, grace […].[31]

Given the nature of the account, which is basically a festival book, the portrayal cannot omit the theme of triumphalism, coupled with the sorrowful first step of the classical *deductio* scheme (see more Chapter 7). Hence, the final blend of contradictory emotional expressions, which further conveys a portrayal of motherly affections based on the bride's virtues and qualities. While these choices are obvious for such a narrative, however, one might be struck by the depiction of the bride who is once again described as cheerful upon leaving her family, which is quite opposite to the traditional perception of trauma. These two episodes thus illustrate the elusiveness not only of emotional performances but also of expectations and conventions as they all depend on the personal and socio-cultural background of the protagonists and the literary agenda of the source authors.

The second and more frequent custom, extant in the sources, is the accompanying of the bride for a certain distance. We have seen this even in the naval departure of Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452] when her brother, the king, sailed

alongside the princess's ship for a couple of nautical miles. The distance and time spent on this prolonged leaving ceremony varies; the same applies for the composition of the farewell company, that is the members of the princely family that participated in the escort. Joanna and Barbara [1565] were accompanied by their sisters Magdalene and Helen as far as Steinach am Brenner, which is the first town after the starting point in Innsbruck (roughly thirty kilometres), and turned back the same day.[32] Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] spent a longer period of time in the company of her family that travelled with her as far as Como (fifty kilometres from Milan), where two-day festivities took place.[33] Joanna of Castile [1496] too was escorted to the port of Laredo by her mother, Queen Isabella, and her siblings Infante John and Infantas Maria and Catherine, future queens of Portugal and England, respectively.[34] Margaret of Habsburg's voyage to her second husband [1501] involved a two-phase escort. First, she parted from Brussels in the presence of her sister-in-law Joanna of Castile and *madame la Grande*, i.e. Margaret of York, widow of Charles the Bold, and Margaret's step-grandmother. Having accompanied the bride for *demye lieue* (half a league) from the city, these two ladies took leave of Margaret, who proceeded to Hal. Half an hour after Margaret and her entourage lodged in this town, she was joined by her brother Duke Philip the Fair. The next day, Philip led his sister a quarter of league outside of Hal until they bade farewell to each other (*ung quart de lieu où se fit le adieu*).[35]

As already seen at other instances, the studied corpus of weddings seems to problematise the entire process, taking into account various other potential choices. The three above-cited examples give evidence to three kinds of escort—a short one-day trip, involving only a few relatives (Barbara and Joanna); a longer excursion spanning several days that entailed the wider family and was coupled with additional pageantry (Bianca Maria, Joanna of Castile); and a multi-stage process of accompanying with various kinsmen taking part at various points of the journey (Margaret). There can hardly be found any paradigm other than the fact that this escorting took place.

Even though many princesses were at the time of their bridal voyages already fatherless, and another member of the princely family had to step in as the main authority, many brides still had living fathers. Yet these parents were by no means physically involved in seeing their daughters off. That was the case of Margaret of Habsburg [1497 and 1501], Catherine [1549 and 1553], and Eleanor [1561]. This fact seems to undermine Carafa's point about the father's central role in the separation—not only is there no evidence of thanksgiving oration or gestures of gratitude from the princess's side but also the princely parents do not seem to have been personally present. However, the fact that a brother could deputise for a father in seeing off the family member points to the collective character of dynasty, in which other members—especially the first-born son—also played prominent roles.[36] This applies especially to the Habsburgs in this period, whose dominions were scattered over various parts of Europe, and

that is why proper dynastic functionality required the participation of more of its members.

Alternatively, the whole leaving process could be considered from a slightly different angle. All above-mentioned cases of the bridal farewell operate with a multi-staged, instead of abrupt and instantaneous departure. Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452] underwent a solemn ceremony and a symbolic crossing of the threshold, only to be visited aboard the ship by her family for several more weeks and to organise a special pilgrimage to the hermitage. Other Habsburg brides were accompanied for some distance, either for a one-day leg of the journey or for several days. And quite surprisingly those princesses lacking any formal farewell (quoted in the last paragraph) had a very close relative in their entourage. For instance, Catherine of Habsburg [1549 and 1553] was accompanied to both Mantua and Cracow by her brother Ferdinand of Tyrol,[37] while there were plans that Eleanor [1561] would travel to Mantua in the company of her brother Archduke Charles as well, but as a result of not an unwelcoming reaction from her husband this scenario was abandoned.[38]

The practice of escorting was not a prerogative of the family bidding farewell to its departing member. We saw a similar way of acting in previous chapter when tracing the princess's steps through a third-party territory: the representatives of the foreign power waited for the bridal traveller on the border and followed her/him until the last quarters of their domain. This habit was a sort of reverence paid to the princess and her dynasty and a part of the wider hospitality offered to any traveller of high rank. However, this was not the point of the escort in course of the bride's farewell. As anthropological studies point out, the separation rites of the bride or groom sometimes need to be repeated more than once as the bond with the native group is so powerful that a single act would not be sufficient to break it.[39] The strength of family ties might account for the multi-step process of the princess's parting that aimed to alleviate the harsh reality of transition. At the same time, one must not forget a tendency that gave rise to the festivisation, discussed in Chapter 4. By the same token, we can speak about the festivisation of the separation and incorporation, which stretched these procedures over the whole course of the bridal journey. Unfortunately though, evidence for these rites is so scarce that it prevents us from tracing the gradual growth of this type of festivisation.

Incorporation

As already repeated several times, the separation of the bride from her native milieu was a slow, continuous process rather than an abrupt event that tends to get attention in the poetic portrayals of princely nuptials. In numerous cases, we have seen several stages to the farewell rites. This phasing is even more visible in the opposite pole to leaving, that is the incorporation of the bride. Although

marking a significant point, the first meeting with the spouse was neither a starting nor final point of the integration, which extended well beyond the nuptials and hence beyond the scope of this book as well. For the purpose of this analysis, only the integrative rituals leading to the princely wedding, and thus being a part of the bridal journey, are addressed.

The second caveat is the different position of the male and female wedding traveller in relation to the entire separation-incorporation scheme. Not coincidentally, the previous sub-chapter has examined the farewell rites of the princesses alone and no grooms have appeared in the analysis. The travelling bridegroom does not seem to have been subjected to a comparable process of separation which one can observe in the brides' departures. Similarly, the system of integration is asymmetrical—aside from the first encounter and a few other minor traits, we lack other pieces of information that would corroborate the same pattern of transition in male and female bridal journeys. This imbalance might be explained by a legal reason, that is, the grooms did not pass through a change in male authority, changing father for husband as the brides did. Still, surprisingly, as this section shows, a limited form of incorporation is traceable also for the incoming princes.

The issue of a princess's integration to the new environment was addressed by several scholars, mostly from a long-term perspective. For instance, Elena Taddei has studied three Ferrarese duchesses, Lucrezia Borgia, Renée of France, and Barbara of Habsburg, and by comparing their different positions and attitudes towards foreign courts, she examined their negative/positive perception by the Ferrarese subjects or their role in cultural transfer.[40] Taddei concludes that even though each of these duchesses actively engaged in the cultural and political exchange, in only one of them (Renée of France) was this process deemed a threat and mostly because of the flawed nature of the incorporation, or rather because of the princess's refusal to integrate. Bethamy Aram, too, looked into tensions and conflicts caused by the different cultural backgrounds of Philip the Fair and Joanna of Castile [1496]. As the native circles of both newlyweds were deeply suspicious of each other, the integration of Joanna completely failed.[41]

However, these two and many other studies concentrated on the bride's incorporation in the period following the nuptials. Aside from often-cited studies by Karl-Heinz Spieß and Cristiane Coester, few scholars have examined the integrative process over the course of the bridal journey on a wider comparative scheme. Many queenly biographies have mentioned this as a part of the wedding's description, but more thematically oriented research would be much needed. Correspondingly, only Katarzyna Kosior has studied the first encounters of newlyweds in a systematic manner, using examples from sixteenth-century France, England, and Poland.[42] She singles out several forms and functions of this crucial, but often by scholars anecdotally treated ceremony, and her study will serve as a starting point of this chapter's analysis.

Kosior recognises three conditions for the first meeting to have special significance. First, a royal bride had to be of foreign origin, i.e. she could not be a member of the local aristocracy; second, the future queen could not be brought up at the same court as her future husband, i.e. she could have been a princess from abroad but she could not have arrived as a child; and lastly, it was necessary to perform a proxy wedding prior to the encounter. Given her geographical focus (France, England, and Poland), Kosior comes up with a more linear structure for the procedure, in which the groom always waits within close distance of his residence for the bride to come. Other models like the husband travelling to fetch his wife or meetings "en route outside of the husband's realm were a rarity in the sixteenth century".[43]

However, the Habsburg weddings in 1448–1565 attest to the fact that the very opposite was possible: as we can see from Table 5.1, almost twenty-five percent of the weddings saw the grooms travelling to reach their brides (B), and the same percentage of the princely pairs met outside the husband's domain (Catherine and Eleanor of Habsburg, 1549 and 1561) or met as children (Mary of Hungary, Anne Jagiellon, 1515). Moreover, the variant taking into consideration male travel (B) could have had two forms—either it was a complete transfer to the wife's court (Maximilian I and II, 1477 and 1548), or the groom visited the bride shortly before the ceremony in her court and returned home, that is he did not fetch her and lead her to his territory (Barbara and Joanna of Habsburg, 1565).

TABLE 5.1 The first encounters of the newlyweds

	A. Linear model (bride meeting husband outside his residence/other place in his domain)	*B. Male transfer/visit*	*C. Other*
Princess/ prince	Eleanor of Scotland [1448]	—	—
	Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452]	—	—
	Elizabeth of Habsburg [1454]	—	—
	—	Maximilian I [1477]	—
	Bianca Maria Sforza [1493/1494]	—	—
	Joanna of Castile [1496]	—	—
	Margaret of Habsburg [1497]	—	—

(*Continued*)

TABLE 5.1 (Continued)

	A. Linear model (bride meeting husband outside his residence/other place in his domain)	*B. Male transfer/visit*	*C. Other*
	Margaret of Habsburg [1501]	—	—
	—	—	Mary of Hungary [1515/1521] (meeting in childhood)
	—	—	Anne Jagiellon [1515/1521] (meeting in childhood)
	Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543]	—	—
	—	Maximilian II [1548]	—
	—	—	Catherine of Habsburg [1549] (husband's visit during the bride's journey)
	Catherine of Habsburg [1553]	—	—
	—	—	Eleanor of Habsburg [1561] (husband's visit during the bride's journey)
	—	Joanna of Habsburg [1565]	—
	—	Barbara of Habsburg [1565]	—
TOTAL	9	4	4

To complicate matters even further there were irregularities in the linear (A), i.e. classic type of meeting too. Having reached Innsbruck, the arranged point of encounter, Bianca Maria Sforza had to wait several months for her bridegroom Maximilian I to show up. At the end, therefore, it was Bianca expecting Maximilian, not the other way around.[44] How did the way the encounter was staged impact the ceremony? What was the protocol—though still unwritten—for the first meeting? This section addresses three means of incorporation, namely verbal, non-verbal, and material. First, attention is turned to the "handing-over" ceremony, which, as is contended, was not

a constant practice but rather one of many tools used in the continuous process of the bride's integration. In this light, also orations and gestures, as well as gifts of carriages or garments, are examined. Then the way of staging the first encounter comes under scrutiny, and it is argued that social, political, but most importantly gender aspects had a decisive impact on the protocol of the newlyweds' encounter. Although still volatile and seldom fixed in written rules, an etiquette for this ceremony emerges in this period.

Handing-over ceremony?

> The handing-over of Marie Antoinette was to signify her farewell to all the persons and all the things which linked her with the House of Habsburg. The masters of the ceremonies had devised a peculiar symbol of this change of mental and material habitat. Not only had it been decreed that none of the members of her Austrian train were to accompany her across the invisible frontier line, but the sometime Archduchess was, on entering France, to have discarded every stitch of her native attire, was not to wear so much as shoes or stockings or shift that had been made by Viennese artificers. From the moment when she became Dauphiness of France, all her wrappings and trappings were to be of French origin.[45]

In this way, Stefan Zweig, the renowned Austrian novelist, describes Marie Antoinette's frontier rite—the handing-over of the princess to the French embassy. The modern audience is perhaps more familiar with this highly choreographed scene thanks to the 2006 Sofia Coppola's film: the young princess enters the tent, raised at the French borders, where she is ceremoniously stripped of everything Austrian she possessed, only to come out on the other side as a French dauphine. Was this rite taking place in each interdynastic princely union?

If we take Marie Antoinette's handover as a model, we can establish three main components of it: spatial (meeting at the border), social (exchanging entourages), and individual one (changing of the princess's appearance, her clothes, hairstyle, etc.). The changing of clothes and look will be discussed a bit later, let us now concentrate on the first two parts. Undoubtedly, the liminal exchange of princesses on the neutral land was quite common. The notorious examples are the 1615 French-Spanish double wedding that saw an exchange of two princesses on a pavilion erected in the middle of Bidasoa river, marking the frontier between the two kingdoms.[46] The same place was chosen for the entry of another Spanish infanta, Maria Theresa, into France [1660].[47] Similarly, a French princess, Anne Marie was first met by her Sabaudian groom, Victor Amadeus II, in Pont de Beauvoisin, the frontier city diving France and Savoy [1684].[48] There are also examples of such rituals from Iberian kingdoms[49] and

from German lands too: for instance, the majority of Habsburg brides from the medieval period were handed over in a border town or in a place lying half-way between the two uniting kingdoms.[50] Yet, only taking into consideration the two just-listed examples, one can see that the social precondition of the handover is not met: Anne Marie [1684] and Maria Theresa [1660] are followed by their French and Spanish attendants, respectively, long after crossing the borders. Clearly, these handovers were not so segregative as in Marie Antoinette's case.

Even more chaotic is the world of the Habsburg brides in ca. 1450–1550. The social element is quite strong but rather than serving as a tool of separation, it was used for incorporation. The arriving bride is often greeted by not one but several welcome parties. A classic example of this is Poland. Three Habsburg princesses who travelled from Vienna to Cracow (Elizabeth 1454, Elizabeth 1543, Catherine 1553) were introduced to the kingdom in almost exactly the same way. Elizabeth [1454] was greeted by the Polish delegation in Cieszyn, a semi-independent duchy in Bohemian Silesia, lying on the western borders of the kingdom of Poland, while two later princesses were welcomed even sooner, in Olomouc (halfway between Vienna and Cracow).

What was the purpose of this welcome delegation? According to the chronicler Długosz, the embassy sent to Elizabeth [1454] amounted to 2,000 horsemen, involving most prominent Polish nobles and their wives. Officially, they were sent to "receive the new spouse" (*ad excipiendum novam coniugem*) which might sound as a general term but further on the account states that Elizabeth was "handed over to the power of the Polish nobles" (*in potestatem baronum Polonie tradita*) and some of the princess's chaperones returned home from there.[51] However, in welcoming Catherine [1553] in Olomouc, there is no sign of "receiving" or "handing-over" the bride: the three Polish potentates "came to meet Catherine in Olomouc, wishing her a happy and prosperous arrival and bringing her all sorts of kindness *(omnia officia)* from her husband".[52]

As one of these emissaries was *lingua promptus* (prompt in speech), it is likely that these wishes took the shape of a formal oration. Unfortunately, this speech is not extant, but we have a similar one, delivered to Elizabeth [1543] at the same spot, from ten years before. After the praise of the princess's virtues and parentage, the sermon sums up the wedding negotiations, ending with the bridegroom's great desire to see his wife:

> […] he would deem nothing more distant than the day on which he could take pleasure in seeing and embracing his most beloved bride. That is why, according to his and his father's will and in accordance with God's, we have been sent to You […] to salute You as our queen and lady and to escort You to your kingdom and dominion with as much honour and reverence as possible.[53]

Using the term "to escort" alludes to the reception and handing-over more than a sole salutation. Yet the speech does not stop at stating the purpose of the mission but actively urges her, quoting Psalm 44:

> Listen, daughter, and pay attention. Forget your people and your father's house because the king has conceived a strong desire for your beauty.[54]

The persona of the orator—the bishop of Płock and Cracow, Samuel Maczejowski—might account for this strong religious undertone. But biblical quotes are not the only rhetorical devices that are used—the oration is filled with praises and exaltations that draw heavily from the epithalamic tradition discussed in Chapter 7. It presents to the princess her in-laws:

> How great is the goodness, how great is the excellent and heroic strength of the most serene Lord, King Sigismund I of Poland [...] whose fame would fill up the entire world—this one would have you as a dear daughter. [...]
>
> Also the most serene Queen Bona [Sforza], whose name itself refers to goodness *(bonitas)*, [...] will surely neglect no service of kindness that a mother ought to bear towards a daughter.[55]

The platitudes and phrases of this sort can be seen as a form of panegyric, but there can be another angle to them. From the princess's perspective, they might have served to ease the tension caused by the separation from her native habitat, and to shape the new family in the contours of the old one, as Kosior argues.[56] The upcoming father-in-law, King Sigismund, will cherish her as his own child, as will the mother-in-law. Given Bona Sforza's hostile attitude towards this wedding and the whole Polish-Habsburg alliance,[57] this statement might sound like a rather cynical way to sugar-coat dynastic hypocrisy. This might have been one of the goals of this rhetoric; after all it was a part of the festivised bridal journey in which every act had a staged character. But the main factor was to function as another point of contact (the first being the reception embassy) between the travelling princess and the foreign court, as another step in the gradual integration.

Was the welcome delegation something other than a prolonged greeting, an act of courtesy anticipating the encounter with the husband—or the law-binding handover? At least Elizabeth's [1454] case explicitly uses the terms "handed-over" (*tradita*) and "to receive" (*ad excipiendum*) the wife. These expressions give sense that a formal transferral of the bride from one party to another was taking place here. Such wording cannot be found in other two Habsburg princesses travelling to Poland, so should their welcomes be understood as handovers? In his work on the 1475 Landshut wedding, Thomas A. Bauer claims that a similar welcome speech had a binding legal meaning and was connected

with a speech in Latin, "the language of law", and this ceremony, usually done at the halfway point, differed from a formal greeting that might have been done in the vernacular.[58] Be it as it may, it is tricky to judge the nature of event given only by the choice of language used for the welcome. One should be cautious when assessing the language of speeches, which is often dehumanising and refers to the princess as if she were goods—it is the language contractual obligation that was at the core of the medieval and early modern dynastic wedding.

Among the fifteenth-century Habsburg weddings, there are also examples that explicitly state that some law-binding rituals took place and encompassed more than a greeting speech. The best documented is in the case of Bianca Maria Sforza [1493]: upon leaving the home territory of Milan and entering the County of Tyrol (that is that Habsburg territory), she was greeted first by Gaudenz of Matsch, a local landlord and a man well-versed in German and Italian politics.[59] Then, right before the town of Mals, the princess was met by a delegation of more than 200 knights and the same amount of foot soldiers, led by three *oratori del serenissimo Re*: Margrave Christoph of Baden, the cousin of Bianca's husband Maximilian, Count Eitel Friedrich II of Hohenzollern, a close associate to Maximilian, and Heinrich von Hewen, the local bishop of Chur. Giasone dal Mayno leaves us a very detailed account of the encounter:

> The said margrave with other lords and gentlemen […] were [assembled] in great order in this valley, and then they saw Her Majesty the Queen [=Bianca] approaching them on foot from a distance of more than one crossbow-shot. Having seen this, the lord marquis [=Ermes Sforza, Bianca's brother] and we, the orators of Your Excellency, dismounted from our horses and we all went together to the cloth of the Queen where she was met by the lord margrave […] After displaying reverence, full of great signs of deference *(grandi segni de submissione)*, the count of [Hohen] zollern—although he was a military man from the noble house, possessing a great authority at the Majesty the King [=Maximilian I]—made a Latin speech, a very ornate and elegant one […].[60]

Dal Mayno then goes on giving the gist of Hohenzollern's oration:

> … that they [=the envoys] were sent to the foot of these mountains to receive *(ricogliere)* Her Majesty [=Bianca Maria], and to show her that the entrance to this country *(patria)* is open and free to pass through further and to reach His Majesty the King, her husband, who is awaiting her with a great desire and anxiety as the one who was elected as his female companion and the dearest thing he has in this world, hoping that her prudence, modesty, goodness, and prosperous physical disposition would result in not small honour, benefit and exaltation of the Holy Empire and the House of Austria would be preserved through her offspring.[61]

Even from this abridged version, the speech contains several common points with the one delivered to Elizabeth of Habsburg in Olomouc [1543]: there are elements of the panegyrical (extolling of the princess's virtues) and epithalamic (the husband anxiously expecting his bride) traditions, coupled with the political and dynastic frameworks that give rise to the wedding. Similarly, too, the term "reception/to receive" is used, but interestingly the princess is not handled so passively—on the contrary, she is only notified that there are no obstacles standing in her way to reach her husband. In other words, the envoys do not appear to be couriers who were intended to pick up the parcel at the border, but rather an animated and polite signpost welcoming the princess on behalf of her new kingdom and dynasty. In this sense, the greeting at the borders of the husband's dominion is similar to the way the princesses were treated when passing the third party's territory, discussed in Chapter 4. Also in this case, there is a strong element of hospitality combined with the mutual exchange of deference.

Fortunately though, we are not left with the description of this encounter and speech alone. After Hohenzollern's oration, they all remounted their horses and proceeded to the nearby town of Mals where they made a triumphal entry which culminated at the local church with the bishop leading prayers. The next morning, the Milanese envoys went to pick up Ermes Sforza, Bianca's brother, and together they accompanied Bianca Maria to the church, where the Mass was celebrated. Following that, Giasone dal Mayno made a slightly improvised response ("I made the answer with the words that appeared convenient to me") to the oration delivered the previous day by the count of Hohenzollern, and then:

> the lord marquis [= Ermes Maria Sforza, Bianca Maria's brother] in the most prudent way presented the queen to the margrave of Baden, according to the instruction of Your Excellency. And having done this, he took his leave and together with the other lords, he returned [to Milan].[62]

Evidently this act was more than a welcome reception offered by any host at any point of the bridal journey, or a chronicler's figure of speech. In the sacral environment of the church, a member of the bride's family formally hands her over to a member (representative) of the husband's family. Once again, the princess is almost reduced to a parcel with its carriers leaving right after the successful delivery. Corroborating the importance of this event, the bride's relative and a significant part of the bridal entourage departs as soon as he is done with this task. The spatial and social elements of the ideal handover are thus reinforced by the formal ceremony. This seems almost identical to the "handing-over" of Elizabeth of Habsburg in 1454, discussed above. Is it thus possible that this ceremony was a standard part of the bridal journey?

The answer seems to be negative. Such ceremonies of delivery were definitely not carried out during the naval voyages—both Joanna of Castile [1496] and Margaret of Habsburg [1497] were welcomed upon their disembarkations

but the sources speak neither about handing-over nor a section of their retinues leaving before the nuptials took place.[63] Even for the princesses taking over-land routes there is not enough evidence to substantiate the claim that this rite was a repeated and expected practice. A roughly corresponding act to Bianca's "handing-over" occurred in Trent in 1565. Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, brother of the duke of Ferrara, approached Barbara of Habsburg saying that he had an order from his brother, the duke, to receive her delivery (*ricevere in consegna*) and to escort her to Ferrara to conclude the wedding. The princess responded that having been sent by her brother, the emperor, to wed the duke, she did not want to go against his wishes, so she had given her consent to the marriage. Having said that, the cardinal touched the princess's hand and addressed to her "words of deepest submission". Immediately afterwards, Barbara's sister Joanna was handed over in the same way to the Florentine emissary, Paolo Giordano Orsini. The ceremony was concluded by Cardinal Borromeo's oration, whose content is not known other than that it invoked the names of the potentates involved in the double-wedding and it contained "all possible forms of kindness (*amorevolezze*)", which points to its strong panegyrical tone.[64]

Comparing this to Bianca's handing-over [1493], one finds many similar features—representatives of the brides' family (Georg of Helfenstein, Joanna's high steward, and Cardinal of Trent, Cristoforo Madruzzo) physically and orally consign the princesses to the husbands' plenipotentiaries. However, unlike the 1493 ceremony which saw Bianca's brother and other noblemen from her retinue return home right after the act, the *consegna* of 1565 did not alter much: both Helfenstein and Madruzzo accompanied the princesses for the rest of their ride. The account describing Joanna's journey briefly refers to only one change—after the "presentation", the princess and her personnel's costs started to be funded by the duke of Florence.[65] However, as we saw in Chapter 2, the sharing of travel expenses was already agreed upon in the wedding contracts and in many cases, princesses were often offered cost-free reception by local powerholders. The transfer of financial accountability was thus settled long before the rite of handing-over, so it does not seem that these two events have any sort of causal relation.

Yet there might be a loose connection between the delivering ceremony and the proxy wedding. In many cases, princely families tended to organise a wedding at the bride's court during which the groom was represented by a proxy, mostly his close relative. Such a rite was supposed to confirm the union and to dispel fears of cancellation by one party. Most likely the 1565 consignment ceremony in Trent had been originally planned to be a proxy wedding but at the very last moment, Emperor Maximilian II issued an order to proceed with the delivering ceremony instead.[66] It is thus possible that this rite could have been deemed a softer version of the wedding by proxy, yet this argument falls short in the cases of Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] and Catherine of Habsburg [1553] who are documented as having undergone both of these ceremonies.[67]

However, there are princely brides who do not seem to take part in either of these rites. Rather than a constitutive act of the wedding (i.e. changing male authorities), the rite of delivery (and the proxy wedding as well) should be treated as one, albeit quite distinct, point in the phased process of the bride's integration. Handing-over at the frontiers visualises well, as Christiane Coester puts it, the amalgam of geographical and symbolical border-crossing (from the native to the husband's land; from daughter to wife) which lay at the centre of the bridal voyage.[68] Nonetheless, at least the studied sample of journeys does not confirm its constant use and fixed place in the bride's reception. Its usage is circumstantial and it seems to be driven by personal or wider political motives.

Eleanor of Portugal's case [1451/1452] hints at the possibility that the handing-over rite was more inherent to the specific circumstances. After the princess's disembarkation and solemn entry to Pisa, a dispute arose between the Portuguese from her company and the welcome delegation sent by Frederick III. The marquis of Valença and the Germans fought over the right to lead the infanta to the future emperor. Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, who eventually won the prerogative for himself, left us two slightly different descriptions of the episode. In the first, the issue was resolved as a result of his interceding and the "marquis, holding the princess's hand, assigned her to Aeneas's hands and wanted a chirograph to be made that would attest that he has done so on the emperor's orders".[69] In the second redaction of the chronicle, Piccolomini adds more details to the story. Reportedly, the marquis justified his claim on account of his and the king of Portugal's honour, the German plenipotentiaries also understood the role of leading the bride in terms of honour, and more so, they did not want to defy Frederick's orders. As none of the sides wanted to yield, the decision was left to the princess who allegedly replied:

> Since my parents were buried and I was just a little girl until this point, I was under the power of my brother and I never violated any of his commands. If the envoys of my lord emperor were sent to lead me to him, I cannot refuse.[70]

Eleanor's speech must be taken with a due grain of salt as it might have been a way to extol the virtues (especially obedience) of the new empress from Piccolomini's side. Still, there must have been some sort of disagreement in Pisa about the handing over as it is mentioned, though again in a slightly different light, also in Piccolomini's *Commentaries*.[71] As each of the nuptial delegations, the Portuguese and the German, had different ideas as to how the princess should be presented to the groom, it is possible that the strict handing-over ceremony to the husband's emissaries was always a result of particular political interests, dynastic bonds, cultural background, and personal stakes. Judging from the studied sample of weddings, in which the handing-over ceremonies are fairly rare (and even then contested—as in the just-quote example of

Eleanor of Portugal) they were not a fixed ritual, but a much more extensive investigation would be needed to corroborate this hypothesis.

Meeting the spouse

What is certain, however, is the frequency of the welcome delegation: for Catherine's case [1553], to give an example, three welcome groups are documented: one led by the two most distinct women in the kingdom, the second, a special envoy to greet Maximilian II, who was supposed to accompany his sister but changed his mind due to a sudden illness, and lastly the convoy of eight carriages.[72] The frequency of these embassies would point to the fact that they were all a part of the gradual introduction of the new royal wife without any legalistic value.

These delegations, dispatched to meet the princess (*venire obviam*), were a very frequent form of the bride's integration. In the so-called linear model of the first encounter (see Table 5.1, above), even the husband participated in this sort of behaviour, travelling to some fixed spot before his residence and expecting the bride there. As Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543] was coming closer to Cracow, her bridegroom Sigismund Augustus, accompanied by 4,000 nobles and knights, rode off to a meadow a quarter of a mile from the city. While a part of his retinue detached and went on to meet the approaching princess, Sigismund took up a provisional residence in the prepared tents. As the bridal train finally arrived, the future queen descended from her carriage and she and her ladies-in-waiting went on to the red carpets, spread out before the tents. The prince came out of the tent and they both gave each other their hands and bowed to the ground. Subsequently solemn orations, lasting for half an hour, on behalf of each party, were delivered, whereupon everybody mounted their travel vehicle again and a triumphal entry commenced.[73]

An almost identical scene took place ten years later when Sigismund Augustus was marrying Elizabeth's sister Catherine [1553], only this time the young king was in the company of his mother Bona Sforza and his sisters as well.[74] With a due amount of variation, a similar course of events is traceable in the other cases: Margaret of Habsburg [1497] was met outside of Burgos by both her future husband John of Castile and her father-in-law, King Ferdinand of Aragon. Again, as the princess was approaching, "numerous noble knights and mighty barons saluted her", that is many delegations went to greet her. Finally having arrived, Margaret wanted to kiss the king's [=Ferdinand's] hands but he refused. Nonetheless, the Habsburg princess stood her ground and managed to kiss not only Ferdinand's but also John's hands.[75]

Since the bridal journey was planned in conjunction with the imperial ride to Rome, Elizabeth of Portugal [1451/1452] did not meet her husband, soon-to-be Emperor Frederick III, at a spot within his domains but on the outskirts of Siena. But in other respects, this encounter is unrecognisable from the classic one: at first, she was greeted by a group of Sienese citizens; then a squadron

of knights led by Frederick's brother Albert rode off to meet her. This delegation was followed by a company commanded by Ladislaus the Posthumous, his cousin and protégé and an heir to the throne of Bohemia and Hungary, and finally, a procession of the local clergy. Frederick, surrounded by prelates and noblemen, was waiting between the second and the third gates into the city

FIGURE 5.1 Pinturicchio, The first meeting of Frederick III and Eleanor of Portugal before Siena in 1452, mural painting, ca 1502. Piccolomini Library, Siena cathedral. Pinturicchio, Public domain via Wikimedia Commons.

and as the newlyweds saw one another, they immediately got off their horses and embraced each other. As in other cases, formal speeches and solemn entry followed.[76]

Nonetheless, these recurrent habits were often twisted. Sometimes the first meeting with the husband was not immediately followed by a triumphal procession to the city but by the nuptial ceremony and consummation of marriage. Both Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] and Margaret of Habsburg [1501] experienced this course of events: Margaret met her second husband Philibert II of Savoy in the Benedictine priory of Romainmôtier. The duke arrived one hour after the princess, greeted her, and retired to his chambers until the evening that was spent in dances. Probably the same night Philibert and Margaret were married and afterwards, "they lay together until twelve o'clock", which—unlike in other cases[77]—did not cause outrage among the monks residing there.[78] After her safe arrival to Innsbruck, Bianca Maria [1493] had to wait more than two months to meet her consort Maximilian I who was hesitant to do so, blaming a lack of time amidst the French invasion of Italy and the Turkish threat.[79] Still, the first encounter did not take place in Innsbruck but in the nearby Hall in Tirol, where Bianca was transported by ship. As soon as Maximilian arrived with a small retinue (again, it is the bride waiting for the groom), Bianca fell on her knees only to be raised again by "hands, kisses, and flattering words", which the future emperor gave her. After the usual speeches, Maximilian accompanied Bianca to her chambers, holding her hand. He himself withdrew to his chambers to finish "other negotiations" until the banquet was prepared, which was followed by card games and other entertainments, and the same night, without any other ceremony (but an oration), the newlyweds shared the marriage bed.[80]

Some princesses even saw their husbands coming from a longer distance, sometimes even meeting them halfway. Catherine [1549] and Eleanor [1561], both heading towards Mantua, met the grooms in Trent and Villafranca, respectively. Other than the usual speeches, there are no particular details extant about these first meetings but both of them are interesting from another point of view: having met and greeted their wives, the Mantuan dukes returned back home the very same day, so technically they did not "lead" the brides but let them continue as previously. Thus, their salutation resembles more an honorary visit rather than the union of the newlyweds, which is the impression the classical linear model gives.

An even more extreme example of such encounters can be found in the marriages of Barbara and Joanna of Habsburg [1565]. Both Alfonso II d'Este, the duke of Ferrara, and Francesco de' Medici, the prince of Florence, had paid visits to their future wives months and weeks before the wedding transfer even started. Alfonso made a trip to Innsbruck, where the Habsburg princesses resided, already in July and Francesco in October, whereas the princesses set out to their husbands as late as mid-November. Unfortunately there are no

exact accounts of the first encounters, we only know that both princes donated precious gifts to their fiancées, spent a few days in their company, and subsequently moved on to Vienna to greet Joanna and Barbara's brothers, Emperor Maximilian II and the Archduke Charles.[81] The Medici prince then prolonged his trip even further, paying a visit to Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol, at that time residing in Prague, and afterwards stopping at the Bavarian court in Munich too. This detour caused a delay to the bridal journey of his future wife Joanna, who was originally (together with her sister Barbara) scheduled to depart from Innsbruck on November 8, but since her consort-to-be was still lagging behind she had to leave one week later.

At first sight, these excursions seem to break with the principle that the groom is the goal of the wedding migration, or, in other words, the final point in the gradual process of integration. Nonetheless, this breach of conventions is only superficial: each of the grooms meeting his spouse earlier than on the day of the final solemn entry then returned to his court, so technically he was still the metaphorical highpoint of the journey. These precursory visits alternate only the customary course of the first encounters, not the entire bridal transfer; rather than a total overhaul, one should deem them an addition to usual practice. Nonetheless, this distinction still has not answered the question: What was the point of such visits? Why did some grooms wait for the brides to come to their residences (or places of the wedding and coronation) while others went ahead and travelled a long distance to visit them first?

One explanation may lie in the social disparity of the newlyweds—in every case involving the groom's visit or encounter at a longer distance from the final point of the journey (Margaret 1501, Catherine 1549, Eleanor 1561, Barbara and Joanna 1565), the princess outranked her future consort in terms of social status, she being the daughter of a king/emperor and he being a duke. The extant sources highlight this class difference by referring to the Habsburg brides first as *geborne Kunigin zu Ungarn und Böhmen* and only afterwards listing their archducal titles.[82] Given the frequency of welcome delegations which the groom's party usually sent to meet the princess, it would be understandable if a minor prince felt obliged to personally make the first salutation to a higher ranking female. After all, there were princes who journeyed all the way to their bride's residence, attended the nuptial ceremony there, and conducted new wives back to their lands.[83] Christiane Coester has concluded that such a scenario was a direct result of the groom's inferiority and she has established it as the third type of bridal journey.[84]

Yet, in contrast to Coester's claim, as we can see, the lower status of the male spouse did alter the course of events, but not in a simple or automatic way. No source illuminates why Francesco III Gonzaga of Mantua [1549] went all the way up to Trent to hail Catherine, while his brother Guglielmo [1561] only went as far as Villafranca. Not even the royal pedigree of Eleanor of Scotland [1448] forced Duke Sigismund of Tyrol to personally fetch his consort.[85]

More so, the visits of the Florentine prince and Ferrarese duke in Innsbruck [1565] were also motivated by the intense precedence conflict of these two. Francesco de' Medici's last-minute voyage to salute his future wife seems to have been driven entirely by Alfonso's activities on the same field. As the Florentine envoy de' Rossi recounts, during the sojourn of the duke in the Tyrolese capital, Francesco's fiancée Joanna

> ordered one of her staffers who speaks Italian to tell me that rumours have it that Your Excellency [= Francesco] would come here, asking me if it is true or not, and that I should inform Your Excellency about the manners of these Ferrarese, which were not appreciated in many respects […] They [= the Ferrarese] arrived on coach horses and in such order that it makes one call them poor vagabonds, rather than gentlemen of the duke of Ferrara. And what is more, they brought with themselves some sort of lousy folk *(gentame)* that hang out in the chambers of these lords.[86]

Despite the inappropriate demeanour of Alfonso's companions, which might have caused malicious joy to the Florentines (who probably exaggerated the story greatly), the harsh truth was that de' Rossi had not heard anything about Francesco's trip and the main goal of the letter was actually to enquire into the prince's intentions.

So far we have dealt with the first encounters that were a result of the bride's progress into the groom's territory with him either waiting at a fixed spot or making an excursion to meet the incoming princess. Aside from some exceptions, this sort of rendezvous occurred in an open-space location that enabled for the due pageantry to be fully displayed, be it the attire of the distinct individuals, crowds of common folk and military squadrons present, or the parade that followed the meeting. Therefore, in its outer form, these meetings mirrored the conventions for royal summits, which relied heavily on a public element as well, and sometimes even occurred solely in open space, like at the Field of Cloth of Gold between Henry VIII and Francis I in 1520.[87]

However, Margaret, Barbara, and Joanna [1501, 1565], who all engaged with their future spouses in the intramural setting of palace or monastery, while also expecting their arrival, did not take part in the extramural welcoming ride-off. Thus, to some extent, these three princesses mirror the scenario that was common in male nuptial journeys. In contrast to the travelling brides, the travelling grooms did not find their consorts awaiting them at the gates or fields adjacent to their residential city but inside of palaces. They also met an influx of welcome delegations, although these might have been a part of solemn entries to the cities. Maximilian I [1477] was on the way to Mary of Burgundy greeted outside the walls of Brussels and Ghent, but having arrived at the latter, which was also Mary's seat, he did not rush to meet his bride. First, he withdrew to the hostel where he changed into the clothes Mary had sent him. Having

received Mary's message that she was ready to meet him, the young Habsburg headed towards the palace, where such a dense crowd of people assembled that he reached the palace stairs only with utmost difficulty. His bride and her step-mother, Margaret of York, came out to meet him in a lobby before their chambers. Maximilian first kissed Margaret and only then his future wife.[88] Then a peculiar rite followed, described by Albrecht III Achilles, elector of Brandenburg, personally present in Maximilian's entourage:

> Immediately afterwards, the duke [= Maximilian] was informed that the lady [= Mary] had hidden a little carnation *(Nelkenblumlein)* somewhere in her robes and his grace had to search for it. Quite modestly, he started with his two fingers to grab and to search, but he managed to find it only when advised by the bishop of Trier to open the lady's garment.[89]

When Maximilian found the carnation, a protracted reading of the wedding contract followed that made Maximilian grump that the long speeches were not why he had come there. Having signed the documents, he donated to his bride a large gem, and the evening was concluded with a sumptuous banquet.[90] Let us pause at the peculiarity of searching for the carnation. This odd scene found its way into many historical works yet no author has tried to explain it.[91] The meaning of this stunt remains ambiguous: on one hand, carnation flowers, imported to Europe from the Middle-East by Ottomans by the end of the fourteenth century, reaching Flanders just a few years before the nuptials of Maximilian and Mary in 1477, were a luxurious commodity and thus a strong vehicle of social status.[92] They were also associated with marriage and love as it was believed their cloves were an aphrodisiac. The last and probably the most intriguing way in which to read this odd rite is to look at the flower in terms of its religious symbolism: among many other spiritual meanings associated with this plant, its English and Latin name (*carnatio*) alike alludes to the incarnation of Christ.[93] Except the loose connection between the name of Christ's mother and the princess (Mary), there is additional evidence that the first encounter of Mary and Maximilian could have borne reference to the biblical story. Prior to Maximilian's arrival, the imperial envoys were sent to ratify the marriage and accordingly to Jean Molinet's chronicle, the bishop of Metz addressed an oration to Mary:

> "You are blessed amongst the women *(Tu es bien heurée entre les femme)*, you are in Emperor Frederick's grace, you will have his son as your husband and through him you will have a child who will save your people from the darkness of death. He will have a great name amongst men because he will be a son of the most noble prince." The lady rejoiced in these kind and comforting words […] and responded: "I am a humble servant *(petite ancelle)* of my most excellent lord. May everything which pleases him happen, it is my pleasure to fulfil his will."[94]

If we are to trust Molinet who uses strong biblical metaphors throughout his account of the marital union (Maximilian being for him almost a Christ-like figure coming to save Burgundy from the French),[95] the meeting of Mary and the imperial envoys is framed as the second annunciation and the carnation flower during the first encounter of the nuptial couple might have been a reference to this biblical rhetoric. Be that as it may, the memory of the flower-searching ceremony probably had a deep impact on Maximilian, as the scene of him holding a carnation appears in his portraits by Joos van Cleve,[96] and it might be echoed also in Antonio de Predis's picture of Bianca Maria Sforza who has the flower tucked behind her girdle. As this depiction of Maximilian's second wife predates their first encounter,[97] the carnation could have been a strategy to present the second marriage in terms of sentimental memories of the first one, and to cast Bianca in the same positive image that Mary impressed on Maximilian. However, this remains a hypothesis, since princely portraits featuring carnations were common in the contemporary Europe.

Aside from the carnation rite, the most interesting fact from this first meeting is the location of the bride during the ceremony. One cannot find her in the extramural greeting delegations, as the bridegrooms awaiting their consorts used to do. Her "ride-off" is restricted to the hallway of the palace. This same pattern emerges again almost a century after when another Habsburg male travels to reach his spouse—before approaching Valladolid, Maximilian II [1548] was saluted by a delegation of Spanish noblemen led by Philip II, his cousin and bride's brother, Pedro Fernández de Velasco y Tovar, a constable of Castile and Giovanni Poggio, a papal nuncio to the Spanish court. Maria, the bride, again, was waiting in the palace in the company of her ladies-in-waiting, but this time, Maximilian II did not stop at his lodgings to change his clothes but headed directly to see her. No precise descriptions of their encounter are extant, Besozzi mentions only briefly how the future spouses exchanged short greetings of mutual respect and courtesy.[98]

Though hard to decipher, there must have been a general acceptance of the rule that the bride was not supposed to ride off to meet her spouse. This hypothesis is supported by the episode during Maximilian I's second nuptials to Bianca Maria Sforza [1493/1494]. As the soon-to-be empress arrived at the agreed place of their encounter first, she and her train had to wait for the groom to show up. Being aware that he might run late, Maximilian explicitly ordered Bianca and her train to not come off to meet him further than to the palace gate.[99] We can see similar arrangements during the first encounters of other travelling grooms too. For instance, Philip of Spain [1554] went to see Mary I first secretly and then publicly, during both of these occasions Mary waited for Philip inside Winchester Palace.[100] Ercole II d'Este [1528] was also presented to his upcoming bride, Renée of France, inside of the residence at Saint Germain-en-Lay;[101] and Anne of Denmark [1589] did not ride off from her temporary lodging in Oslo to greet the arriving James VI of Scotland either.[102]

This bulk of cases from various parts of sixteenth-century Europe thus hints at the existence of a non-written protocol that required the women, waiting for their consorts, to take a passive role, regardless of their status (be it a regnant queen or infanta), perhaps signalling modesty and decorum, which are after all queenly qualities that Carafa recommends as well.

Tokens of incorporation

After this long exposition of the various ways that the first encounter of the princely newlyweds could look like, let us inspect closely the language of acts and symbols used in these encounters that propelled the integration of the incoming spouse. This symbolic interaction could have been of a threefold character: verbal, non-verbal, and material. The verbal side of the integratory process, i.e. welcoming orations, has been already examined in the examples of Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] and Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543]. To summarise them briefly, these speeches accentuated affection with which the future husband, her family, and the entire kingdom/duchy awaited the new queen or duchess, highlighting the dynastic significance of the marital union and exploiting panegyrical and biblical phraseology.

The non-verbal aspect of this first contact with the future spouse and his/her lead-in delegations occurred on the level of bodily acts. Similarly as for the farewell, Diomede Carafa in his manual did not forget to include counsel as to how the queen should behave face-to-face to her never-before-seen spouse. First, he addresses the possibility that the husband might come to meet her in disguise:

> It is probable that before You arrive [to your husband's court], your husband would come to meet you in disguise—to investigate and observe Your appearance and manners. That is why it is necessary that You treat those who would come to meet you in such a way that even if the disguised king would be present, he would learn Your excellent prudence. And if You recognize the king, still, try to hide Your discovery until he clearly wishes to expose himself. Even then, try to look surprised, as if it were hardly believable. When it will be no longer possible for him to hide, immediately get off the horse and honour him according to his status and do not grant him anything except clasping of hands *(coniunctio dextrae)*.[103]

A few lines ahead, Carafa offers another piece of advice for the first meeting:

> I have no doubt that You will be scared *(expaveas)* during the first meeting with Your husband, and by no means I blame You for that. Bashfulness is suitable for a woman because it is a sign of chastity; in the same

> way, reticence in speaking—unless asked—and seldom speaking out is more appropriate. When asked, courteously [You should] reply to everybody but with the fewest words possible. You should maintain this manner [in communication] with everybody, but especially with the king.[104]

This counsel, like the entire treatise, reflects the author's and broader contemporary view of the woman's total subservience to the man's will. Intriguingly, however, Carafa implements a psychological (if we can call it that) element, and, trying to delve into the princess's emotions, he advises—in his typical manner—to use a negative or difficult situation as to propel social prestige.

Even more remarkable is Carafa's tip on how to behave during the king's coming in disguise. This manner of first meetings was very popular in medieval and early modern Europe. The notoriously known example of the princely husband concealing himself before the bride is Henry VIII's initial contact with Anne of Cleves. Ultimately, this encounter turned sour as the fourth wife of the Tudor king did not react properly to the masked Henry, although, strictly speaking, she acted according to Carafa's intentions (that she most probably had never heard of).[105] Carafa himself was probably inspired to incorporate this advice by the events of the Milanese princely nuptials in 1468. Galeazzo Maria Sforza, running into his wife Bona of Savoy, was announced to her as the duke's brother, not as the duke himself. Only after a while, she recognised him, recalling the duke's portrait. Immediately she got off the horse—which Carafa would approve—and they embraced and kissed one another—which Carafa would not endorse.[106]

Even though Warnicke links the emergence of this act with the influence of chivalric literature in the fourteenth century, it seems to be much older. Writing in the eight century, Paul the Deacon in his *Historia Langobardorum* (History of Lombards) describes how the seventh-century King Authari travelled disguised to Bavaria to inspect his upcoming bride Theodolinda. Being delighted by the princess's beauty, the masked king asked her to pour wine for him:

> […] she passed [the cup] to Authari, whom she did not know was her bridegroom. He drank it and when returning the cup—without anybody noticed— he touched her hand with a finger and with his right hand, he stroked his face from the forehead to the nose.[107]

Ashamed by such an intimate gesture, Theodolinda recounted it to her nurse who instantly spilled the beans to the puzzled princess—it must have been the groom because nobody else would dare touch her. Nonetheless, both remained silent and Authari revealed his true identity only when leaving Bavaria.[108] Paul the Deacon's story might not be based on the real events, however, it documents that at least in written culture, the trope of disguised bridegroom already

existed and it already consisted of the structure, well-known in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: the groom gives hints of his identity, the bride plays along, pretending that she does not know him.[109]

Still, based on Warnicke's formidable list of the grooms in disguise, covering examples from Scotland to Naples,[110] it seems that there was no common pattern or regional custom dictating the king to behave in this way, not even the expectations forcing him to do so. For examples, the nuptials of the Austrian Habsburgs in 1448–1565 saw no groom in undercover. One reportedly took place in the first half of the fifteenth century between Frederick III's parents, Duke Ernest the Iron and Cymburgis of Masovia, but we know little about it.[111] Not even Maximilian I and his son Philip, avid admirers of the chivalric culture, are recorded to perform this act. On the contrary, Philip II of Spain was obviously a passionate supporter of it, since he mingled in the crowd to observe his first wife, Maria of Portugal [1543] as well as his fourth wife, Anne of Habsburg [1570].[112]

An intriguing attempt to find a deeper logic in this ceremony was made by Daniel Nordman when discussing Charles IX's disguise in Mézières in 1570. By masking himself, Nordman argues, the king sought to shed off his royal status. Since Mézières did not belong to his realm, Charles did not want to stage his royal body in the city laying outside of his sovereignty.[113] Tempting as it may sound, this hypothesis ignores the fact that there was a difference between the real disguise and the so-called incognito mode of travel. The incognito did not mean the complete anonymity; it meant giving up the ceremonial splendour that was appropriate to the person's status.[114] If Charles did not want to enter Mézières as the king of France, he might have simply opted for the incognito mode, yet his presence was clearly anonymous to the majority of those present. Therefore, the explanation, offered by Rethe Warnicke, seems to be much more plausible: the masking gave to the royal groom "an opportunity to demonstrate his premiere status in his realm, to reaffirm to his peers his 'royal dignity' and to prove himself a chivalric ruler with courteous manners".[115] In other words, it was a way to elevate one's status by aligning oneself with the societal models and ideals. This ceremony thus was simply a result of the groom's own bidding, influenced by romantic and chivalric ideas. Also, it represented a subtle form of control over the bride, which is also a meaning we are getting from Carafa's advice: if the princess does not know who is really the husband, she needs to pay extra attention to her demeanour. There is always a possibility that a stranger might be the future spouse, so everybody must be treated with caution.

Alternatively, one might understand it as a way to channel the groom's anxiety too—as Katarzyna Kosior aptly points out, the grooms were also anxious to show their good reputation, but one can add that "anxious" in another sense of the word too. Carafa's words about the fear and awkwardness during the

first meeting with the never-before-seen spouse can be applied to males too. Interestingly, Piccolomini records the emotional commotions of the groom, not the bride:

> When the emperor [Frederick III] saw the bride [Eleanor of Portugal, 1451/2] from the distance, he paled. But the longer he observed her angelic face and noble bearing *(gestus)*, the quicker he returned to the previous colour and was pleased.[116]

In the second redaction of the same chronicle, Piccolomini blunts the sharp edges of the scene. He leaves out the description of Frederick's face shock but does mention the second part—that when watching Eleanor's manners, he was pleased and found her more and more beautiful. Interestingly, he adds a sentence that the emperor "did not find himself to be a prisoner of his words, as often happens to the princes who conclude marriages via proxies".[117] Although using slightly different means, both accounts psychologise Frederick and characterise him as an anxious groom, concerned to see whether his bride would meet his expectations. The emotional battleground is reduced to the expression of his face and soul. It is definitely a way to humanise the emperor, in a similar way that the sorrowful scenes of farewell were meant to make subjects empathise with the royal families, as pointed out by Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly.[118] But at the same time, it can be read as another form of channelling one's own curiosity and desire to apply oneself to the trope of the yearning groom, ubiquitous in epithalamia poetry. It is the same kind of reaction as the trope of the disguised groom. The only difference is the active and passive stance, but the features and aspects of this occasional spontaneity, to use Kosior's expression, are identical.

Speaking about the actual encounters, there does not seem to be a general pattern in the use of gestures. The princely couple might have bowed to each other and clasped hands (Elizabeth of Habsburg, 1543, Catherine of Habsburg, 1553)[119] or embraced each other (Eleanor of Portugal, 1452).[120] These can be deemed to be a symmetrical form of behaviour, while other cases are clearly asymmetrical, with one part, usually the bride, assuming the inferior role: knelt before the husband (Bianca Maria Sforza, 1494) or kissing his hands (Margaret of Habsburg, 1497).[121] These variations might be partly explained by different local customs, for instance, the Mantuan envoy Vivaldini warns his lord intending to meet Catherine of Habsburg in Trent [1549] that "during the first meeting with his spouse, the lord duke should not dare to kiss her but only to touch her hand and to embrace her, according to the German tradition".[122] Nonetheless, Carafa makes no mention that such clasping of hands is alien to Italian custom, so it is doubtful whether the rules for encountering the spouse were culturally based or a product of ad hoc deliberation. Still, Vivaldini's remark is a clear testimony that the rules of the first meeting were not given but negotiated and discussed beforehand.

One common feature appearing in many cases (and in numerous instances when facing the welcome legations) and likewise recommended by Carafa is dismounting from the horse or carriage. At least in the spirit of Carafa's *De institutione*, this act from the side of the bride was supposed to express not only a courtesy but also a broader sense of subservience and willingness to obey a new authority. In this respect, the dismounting from the horse and other acts of reverence (kneeling, kissing the hands) would mirror the farewell rites as envisaged by Carafa. These gestures are usually associated with the end of the princess's transition from the one male authority (father) to another (husband). Katarzyna Kosior also claims that these physical deeds "demonstrated control over the bride and his [=the groom's] own masculinity".[123] Yet in cases of the studied sample of wedding, the power dynamics are not as clear as one would think: many times the actions (e.g. embracing, clasping hands) are well-balanced with neither side looking inferior, and the husband actively trying to stop the wife's gestures of submissiveness. Although the latter argument might be rebuffed as a sort of courtesy from the husband's side, still, it can indicate that the situation was much more complicated. Rather than accentuating the groom's dominance, the rituals performed during the first meeting manifested unity and integration, which can be understood on a personal (a union of two people joining together in matrimony), a family dynastic (receiving a new member of the princely house) or wider social level (welcoming a new queen/duchess). All of these aspects are palpably present also in the welcoming orations, as shown in the previous parts of this chapter.

Besides speeches and gestures, this integration could have been propelled by material means, especially gifts. Presents of all sorts were an integral part of the princely nuptials as a whole, representing their union (e.g. by the exchange of rings during betrothal). As Natalie Zemon Davis points out, gifts also helped to strengthen alliances created by marriage (with husband, his parents, etc.) or they could contribute to the festival character of the event.[124] Except the dowry (that could partly consist of precious objects) and other dotal sums (such as *donatio propter nuptias* or *Morgengabe*), the wedding gave rise to many other instances of gift-giving. The same applies for the bridal journeys—presents were being exchanged between the nuptial couple, between the travelling prince/princess and the people she/he met with, and so on. For now, let us focus on two types of gifts which were exchanged during the bridal transfer and closely tied to the process of incorporation: clothes and carriages.

In the course of the numerous journeys, a recurrent pattern emerges: prior to the bride's arrival, the groom dispatches, along with one of the welcome delegations, one or more highly ornamented carriages or coaches. Catherine of Habsburg [1553] received a golden wagon drawn by eight horses a day before her first meeting with her husband,[125] and the same princess was given two "very costly" carriages made precisely for her entry to Mantua in 1549.[126] Bianca Maria Sforza [1493], who ran into three fine carriages sent by her husband right

before entering the Habsburg lands in Mals, was probably greatly captivated by them as she meticulously describes their semblance in a letter to her sister Anna:

> The first one was entirely ornamented by carvings and the ducal [=Milanese] crest, covered by golden and crimson drapes, drawn by six white horses. The second was similar to the first one, but the carvings were not so delicate and there was the royal [=Habsburg/German] crest, and eight red horses. One can see nothing but gold. A superb thing. The third was dark with four horses.[127]

Apart from the princess's fascination, this report shows that the carriages were not only a means of travel but also luxury items that were not only to honour the new queen/duchess but also to demonstrate her high status and the magnificence of the nuptials. Furthermore, displaying the crests of both dynasties highlighted the unifying element of the gift, which was not only a vehicle of physical transport but also, in a way, a sort of matrimonial propaganda on wheels.

Another important means in the incorporative process was attire. The sartorial element was crucial during the wedding: as Ulinka Rublack demonstrated, dress in the Renaissance was not solely about ornamentation but could manifest a personal or national identity.[128] Since the inter-dynastic marriages were one of the relatively rare occasions for premodern monarchs to meet, they functioned, to use Kirsten O. Frieling's term, as small-scale international fashion forums, during which not only wedding guests but also a wider public could encounter and study foreign dress styles.[129] Foreign fashion could have been exhibited not only by the main arriving protagonist, that is, the soon-to-be queen or duchess, but also by her trousseau, which served as a reservoir of otherness for the future, and by her fellow-countrymen and women. Nevertheless, the arrival of the bride could have worked as a premodern form of fashion show only if the dress was not laden with purpose to incorporate the individual into the new environment, as we have seen earlier in this chapter. Christiane Coester concisely but thoroughly demonstrated that accepting the fashion of the husband's cultural circle was a recurrent theme during many international marriages and it was a sign of endorsement of the new culture from the bride's side.[130] Thus, the changing of clothes could have had a symbolic meaning which was sometimes reinforced by performing this ritualistic change during the wedding ceremony, as documented for Hedwig Jagiellon [1475].[131]

Rather than with the nuptial ceremony, the changing of clothes is commonly associated with the so-called handover, as we have seen above. In a scene firmly embedded in popular imagination, Marie Antoinette enters the border tent as an Austrian archduchess and leaves it from the other side, donning French fashion.[132] The previous subsection showed the inconsistency and variability of the handover ritual. The same can be said about the sartorial rite of passage. Even the brides who engaged in a choreographed exchange on

a liminal territory were not automatically required to change fashion in the way Marie Antoinette is portrayed. Elizabeth of Bourbon, one of the princesses taking part in the staged exchange on Bidasoa river [1615], adopted the Spanish fashion long before the nuptials took place, already in 1612. Reportedly, when the young princess heard about her engagement, she asked for the Spanish-style garments from her godmother and governess of Low Countries, Archduchess Isabel Clara Eugenia. Two days after receiving them, Elizabeth started to wear them, even during the ceremonial signing of marital contracts. The Spanish envoys, however, did not fail to mention that despite the future queens donning the Spanish ruff, her manners remain French. But then, during her progress to the husband's court, Elizabeth wore her natal French dresses as far as Vittoria, not from the moment of the border crossing.[133] Another princess crossing French border at Bidasoa river, Maria Theresa [1660], was also replacing her natal Spanish fashion with the French one only gradually. First, she refused to get rid of her farthingale, a characteristic feature of Spanish fashion at that time. Due to its large size, her husband and mother-in-law had to sit behind her on the couch. Only in the days following her entry into France, Maria Theresa began to adopt French features in her hairstyle or attire.[134] Even the notoriously known and often-quoted case of Marie Antoinette is dubious: as Carmen Ziwes sharply points out, the ritual changing of dress as popularised by Stefan Zweig is documented in only one contemporary source, however, its author was not an eye witness of the event.[135]

Even though Christiane Coester tentatively presumes that the brides always did (or, were expected to) undergo some physical transformation, e.g. changing of clothes, adornments, or hairstyle, in order to adapt to the new environment, this was certainly not the case always.[136] Jean Molinet did not omit to write down that Joanna of Castile [1496] made a solemn entry to Antwerp riding a mule *à la mode d'Espaigne*, a remark that the chronicler makes in portraying the princess's unusual bed with a canopy too.[137] Molinet uses the same expression for Margaret of Habsburg's dress, worn during her proxy wedding with the duke of Savoy [1501],[138] which either attests to a wider popularity of the Spanish fashion or, more likely, to new cultural identity of the princess, who, being briefly wed to John of Castile [1497], spent only several months in the Iberian peninsula but during the nuptials made a solemn entry to Burgos dressed *à la mode franchoise*.[139] This further proves Katarzyna Kosior's point about the composite identities of these royal women—during her Polish wedding Catherine of Habsburg [1553] too was wearing garments related to her late Mantuan husband.[140] Thus, Catherine and Margaret alike did not miss to manifest their identity as widows either.

Such an identity was not exhibited only by garments but also by many different objects like ornaments, gems, or accessories. Many times, as Diana Antilles demonstrated in the case of Valentina Visconti (1371–1408), precious items, being a part of the bride's trousseau, could have possessed emblems of both her

husband and father, which can be interpreted as a willingness not only to accept the new identity (of the princely consort) but also to retain the ancestral one. What is more, there are strong hints that these endeavours were Valentina's deliberate efforts.[141] A similar willingness is observable for Eleanor of Habsburg [1561], who, prior to her departure for Mantua, communicated to her husband that at the right time, she would "voluntarily adopt the Italian fashion, but she cannot [do it] now, since wearing something light on the head [as the Italian fashion requires] would harm her [= Eleanor] because of the cold".[142]

The predominance of one's cultural code, not only in terms of attire but also, for example, regarding the style of ceremonies or dining, was always the result of numerous factors, such as the personal motivations of the newlyweds or dynasties or a wider political climate. The latter is visible in Maximilian I's acceptance [1477] of Burgundian fashion, which was to strengthen the unity of the Burgundian dominions in times of crisis. Generally speaking, each wedding party made an effort to culturally prevail, for instance, Emperor Maximilian II let the Florentines know that he would be much pleased if the nuptials of his sister Joanna [1565] would be performed *all'alemanna* (in the German style).[143] Sometimes, insistence on one's cultural code and the refusal to compromise was so strong that it led to clashes and open hostility. Such was the case of the Muscovite princess, Elena Ivanovna [1495], marrying the Polish prince and future king Alexander. Elena not only brought wedding dress for herself and her groom in the Muscovite style along with many Orthodox religious items (e.g. icons) but also refused to board a carriage sent to her by the husband, and the entire nuptial ceremony was confessionally split with each of the spouses following her/his religious custom.[144]

Sartorial and other items as a token of integration and marital harmony worked regardless of the gender. For instance, a rare piece of evidence of this resurfaced for Matthias Corvinus and Beatrice of Aragon [1476]. One year before the nuptials and Beatrice's transfer to Hungary, the Neapolitan envoys paid a visit to Matthias. Aside from bringing the official news of betrothal, these messengers also brought gifts from the bride. Surprisingly, these were not only presented to the Hungarian monarch but he was ritually dressed in them during the church ceremony:

> [Prelates] clothed the king in the white damask undergarment *(albicanti tunica ex adamesco)* and girded him with a black belt. Then, they brought him before the altar and there, they dressed him in a precious cloak *(precioso pallio)* with a red Persian trimming *(parsica subductura ex rubeo)*, adding a necklace of precious Arabian gold [on the neck] together with a ring on the finger. Decorated in this way, the king awaited the end of the holy office.[145]

Such an outlandish ceremony is impossible to bracket. While bearing some similarities with wedding by proxy, it cannot be it, as there is no mention of

a liturgical *ordo* asking the spouse and her representative for their consent to the marriage, nor is there a symbolic bedding ceremony.[146] More than anything else, it should be read as a deliberate political and personal statement. As Katarzyna Kosior remarked, it was profitable for the kings to showcase their foreign wives in their native dresses since it proved the links established via marriage. Bona Sforza [1518] and her ostentatious Italianess helped her Polish husband to achieve the image of a Renaissance monarch.[147] A similar point is made by Abby Zanger when discussing the marriage of Louis XIV [1660]: erasing cultural differences between the spouses would defeat the diplomatic and political aim of the union which was to connect the culturally separated realms of France and Spain.[148] Matthias's donning of the Aragonese style of her upcoming bride is one step further in the same logic—it is not only the foreign princess exhibiting otherness but the king himself adopting it too.

However, at least for travelling grooms, donning attire sent by their wives seems to be a regular practice. Also in their case, it is a visual manifestation of conjugal harmony mixed with highly political statements. Both Maximilian I [1477] and Maximilian II [1548] were given clothing shortly before the first encounter with their spouses—the former found it in his lodgings following his solemn entry into Ghent and preceding his meeting with Mary of Burgundy[149]; whereas the latter was presented with two silver trays, loaded with richly made shirts, handkerchiefs, and other clothes a day before his final arrival in Valladolid and the introduction to his spouse Maria.[150] Interestingly, at least for the 1477 occasion, the gift of clothes was not made at one instance only, but Mary kept sending Maximilian a new outfit on numerous days between his arrival and the nuptial ceremony: the day after his arrival, he was presented with a golden and silver robe in the Burgundian fashion, with an overgarment made from black atlas silk; on another day, with a robe from white atlas silk, a red atlas overgarment and a golden chain, and a day after that with a black-silk robe in the Italian style.[151] The mention of the "Burgundian fashion", but more importantly, the use of black was strongly tied to the Valois dukes of Burgundy, especially Philip the Good, who propagated this colour in the princely sphere in general. More specifically, black was tied to the fashion of the sixteenth- and seventieth-century Spanish Habsburgs who—as the descendants of Maximilian I and Mary—claimed Burgundian legacy.[152] The garments, imbued with such strong ties to the previous Burgundian dukes, were without doubt an attempt to present continuity with the past and legitimacy of the Habsburg prince as a husband to the heiress of the Burgundian lands, but at the same time, a powerful tool to cast Maximilian in Burgundian style, i.e. to incorporate him.

To summarise, both separation and incorporation of the brides, rather than being single events, were multi-staged and phased processes. Rites of separation were not a simple farewell to family, laden with tears or other emotional expressions as literary depictions might suggest, but a complex amalgam of official

church liturgy and escorting by the family. Although Carafa's treatise advises an active role for the departing princess who ought to address a quasi-confessional speech to her father, the studied cases show that fathers seldom participated in seeing their daughters off. However, it was other family members who deputised for parents and often, they accompanied the princesses up to the final point of the journey. This points to the fact that the separation and incorporation of the brides were often blurred or overlapping. The integrative process could have been performed orally (welcoming speeches by embassies meeting the bridal train), materially (by gifts of carriages or clothes), or by gestures displayed during the first encounter of the newlyweds. Rather than expressing male dominance, each of these modes highlighted the unification and junction. In some journeys, the so-called handover of the bride is traceable; however, its circumstantial use suggests that it was only an ad hoc ceremony or a variation of the proxy wedding, and a sort of reinforced version of the traditional multi-staged welcoming process.

Regarding the first meeting of the spouses, the overwhelming majority of princesses saw their consorts right before the final solemn entry, with the husband waiting in an extramural setting, but there were instances when the grooms made visits to their brides prior to or in the early stages of the journeys, which might have been motived by inequalities in social rank or political situation. Last but not least, the ritual transition and staging of the first meeting constitutes a clear gender difference between female and male spousal transfers. The grooms do not seem to have undergone any rite of separation or farewell to the family. However, one can palpably trace some tokens of inclusion (i.e. garments) offered to the arriving males that were to convey the image of the incoming prince in a politically convenient form. Also, adapting the wife's attire shows that the incorporative rituals were by no means supposed to convey male dominance but rather the conjugal harmony, and in extension, dynastic and political bonds. Furthermore, the comparison of the staging of the newlyweds' first meetings reveals the existence of a gendered protocol, probably accepted throughout medieval and early modern Europe: whereas the incoming brides made their first contact with the husband in an extramural setting, the incoming bridegrooms are always presented to their consorts in an intramural one. From the sources at hand, it remains unclear what the rationale was behind this convention, perhaps it was meant to reinforce the notions of male activity and female passivity. However, as we shall see in the next section, the travelling brides, empowered by the liminal moment, were by no means a compliant pawn.

Notes

1 Coester, 'Crossing Boundaries'.
2 Kosior, *Becoming a Queen*, 23–59.

3 Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 116–145.
4 Pina, *Chronica de el-rei D. Affonso V*, I:124.
5 M. Cecilia Gaposchkin, 'Sacralizing the Journey. Liturgies of Travel and Pilgrimage before the Crusades', in *Travel, Pilgrimage and Social Interaction from Antiquity to the Middle Ages*, ed. Jenni Kuuliala and Jussi Rantala (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020), 205–225.
6 Lanckman, *Diário de viagem*, 50.
7 Dmitri Zakharine, 'Medieval Perspectives in Europe: Oral Culture and Bodily Practices', in *Body—Language—Communication. An International Handbook on Multimodality in Human Interaction*, ed. Alan Cienki et al., vol. 1 (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2013), 349.
8 Hersch, *The Roman Wedding*, 176–177.
9 Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 130.
10 Lanckman, *Diário de viagem*, 50.
11 Ibid.
12 Although Lanckman does not state its name, he gives specifics that it lies in the last part of the Earth (*finibus terre*), just like Finisterre in Galicia, and that it is dedicated to Virgin Mary. Given the location and the patron, the safest candidate is the sanctuary of Our Lady of Cabo (*Nossa Senhora do Cabo*), situated a few kilometres south from Lisbon.
13 Lanckman, *Diário de viagem*, 54.
14 Pina, *Chronica de el-rei D. Affonso V*, I:125.
15 Lanckman, *Diário de viagem*, 38–48.
16 Costa, 'O Casamento de Leonor e Frederico III', 17–19.
17 Monique Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal, duchesse de Bourgogne. Une femme au pouvoir Au XVe siècle* (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 1998), 31–32.
18 Louis-Prosper Gachard, ed., *Collection de documents inedits concernant l'histoire de la Belgique*, vol. 2 (Brussels: Louis Hauman et Comp., 1834), 77.
19 Weightman, *Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy, 1446–1503*, 45–47.
20 Carafa, *De institutione vivendi*, 16–17.
21 Carafa, 20.
22 Zakharine, 'Medieval Perspectives in Europe: Oral Culture and Bodily Practices', 353.
23 Angelo de Tummulillis, *Notabilia temporum di Angelo de Tummulillis da Sant' Elia*, ed. Constantino Corvisieri (Livorno: Tipografia Francesco Vigo, 1890), 193.
24 "gli me è parso vedergli più allegrezza di quando ella era in compagnia." Sigismondo de' Rossi to Duke Cosimo I, Rovereto, 23 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, fol. 236.
25 de Tummulillis, *Notabilia temporum,* 222.
26 Adriana R. de Almeida, 'Perspetiva sobre a história das Emoções. O Casamento de d. Leonor de Portugal com o imperador Frederico III (1452)', in *Casamentos da família real portuguesa: diplomacia e cerimonial*, ed. Ana Maria S.A. Rodrigues et al., vol. 1 (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 2017), 275–276.
27 Lanckman, *Diário de viagem*, 48–50.
28 Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, '"Mit offentlich-ausgebrochenen Liebes=Thränen" - How and Why Early Modern Festival Books Depict Emotions', *History of Emotions - Insights into Research*, November 2014, https://doi.org/10.14280/08241.34.
29 Kosior, *Becoming a Queen*, 45–47.
30 Jean Héroard, *Journal de Jean Héroard sur l'enfance et la jeunesse de Louis XIII (1601–1628)*, vol. 2 (Paris: F. Didot, 1868), 183; Laura Oliván Santaliestra, 'Isabel of Borbón's Sartorial Politics: From French Princess to Habsburg Regent', in *Early Modern Habsburg Women: Transnational Contexts, Cultural Conflicts, Dynastic Continuities*, ed. Anne J. Cruz and Maria Galli Stampino, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 228.

31 de' Marchi, *Narratione particolare*, fol. 7r.
32 TLA, HS 5565, p. 1.
33 Tatti and Stampa, *Annali sacri della città di Como*, 3:412–413.
34 Padilla, *Crónica de Felipe I.*, 36–7.
35 Molinet, *Chroniques*, 5:154.
36 Liesbeth Geevers and Mirella Marini, 'Introduction', in *Dynastic Identity in Early Modern Europe: Rulers, Aristocrats and the Formation of Identities,* eds. Liesbeth Geevers and Mirella Marini (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 13–14.
37 C.C. (?), *L'entrata*, ASMn, AG 199, fol. 84/1.
38 See the subchapter "Why So Great?"
39 Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 129.
40 Taddei, "'Fremde Fürstinnen in Ferrara"'.
41 Aram, 'Voyages from Burgundy to Castile'.
42 Katarzyna Kosior, 'First Meetings of Early Modern Royal Couples in Poland, France, and England: Protocol, Ceremony, and Emotion', *Zeitschrift für slavische Philologie* 76, no. 2 (2020): 317–337.
43 Kosior, 'First Meetings', 320.
44 Hochrinner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 46–47.
45 Stefan Zweig, *Marie Antoinette. The Portrait of an Average Woman* (New York: The Viking Press, 1933), 13.
46 J.H. Elliott, 'The Political Context of the 1612–1615 Franco-Spanish Treaty', in *Dynastic Marriages 1612/1615: A Celebration of the Habsburg and Bourbon Unions*, ed. Margaret M. McGowan (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 5–6.
47 Mark de Vitis, 'The Queen of France and the Capital of Cultural Heritage', in *Early Modern Dynastic Marriages and Cultural Transfer*, ed. Joan Lluís Palos and Magdalena S. Sánchez (Farnham: Ashgate, 2016), 48.
48 Margaret R. Toynbee, 'A Royal Wedding Journey through Savoy in 1684', *History (London)* 26, no. 101 (1941): 41.
49 Ezequiel Borgognoni, 'Viaje de princesas y cambio identitario en la España de los Austrias', *Memoria y Civilización* 22 (2019): 615.
50 Debris, *Tu Felix Austria, nube*, 384.
51 Długosz, *Annales*, 177.
52 Orzechowski, *Panagyricus*, [C iii].
53 BJ, MS 245, AT, tomus XVII (1542–1543), fol. 550.
54 AT XVII, fol. 550.
55 AT XVII, fol. 552.
56 Kosior, 'First Meetings'.
57 Przemysław Jędrzejewski, 'Elżbieta Austriaczka—Królowa polska i wielka księżna litewska (1526–1545)', *Res Gestae. Czapismo historyczne* 1 (2015): 110.
58 Bauer, *Feiern unter den Augen*, 80.
59 Giasone dal Mayno and other envoys to Lodovico Sforza, [Mals, 16 December] 1493, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, fol. 55/1; Calco, 'Nuptiae augustae', 531.
60 Giasone dal Mayno and other envoys to Lodovico Sforza, [Mals, 16 December] 1493, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, fol. 55/2.
61 Ibid.
62 Giasone dal Mayno and other envoys to Lodovico Sforza, [Mals, 16 December] 1493, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, fol. 55/3.
63 Brassart, *Documents concernant le voyage*, 4–5; Molinet, *Chroniques*, 5:61–65.
64 Polidoro Castelli to Prince Francesco I, Trent, 21 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, fol. 436.
65 TLA, HS 5565, p. 7.
66 Grohs, 'Italienische Hochzeiten', 350–351.
67 Bianca: the wedding by proxy took place on 30 November 1493 in Milan before her departure and Maximilian I was represented by his chamberlain Caspar von

Meckau, Cardinal Melchior of Meckau, and others. Calco, 'Nuptiae augustae', 528–529; Hochrinner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 19–26. Catherine was wedded by proxy in Vienna in June 1553, Jan Przerębski, royal secretary and bishop of Chełm, stood in for the absent groom during the nuptial rite, while the proxy bedding ceremony was performed by Prince Mikołaj Radziwiłł (not known which one as in this period there were two influential figures bearing this name and title). Orzechowski, *Panagyricus*, [c].

68 Coester, 'Crossing Boundaries', 9.
69 Pius II, *Historia austrialis*, 1:154.
70 Pius II, *Historia austrialis*, 2:577–578, 580.
71 Pius II, *Commentaries*, 1:110–113.
72 See the subchapter "Marital symmetry".
73 *Kurtze Beschreibung deß Einzugs*, 1–2. Printed and translated in Mulryne, Watanabe-O'Kelly, and Shewring, *Europa Triumphans*, 1:394–397.
74 Orzechowski, *Panagyricus*, [e ii/v]–[e iii].
75 Molinet, *Chroniques,* 5:68–69.
76 Pius II, *Historia austrialis*, 1:155–156.
77 Joanna of Castile's younger sister Isabel also consummated the marriage in a monastery, which was allegedly deemed as scandalous behaviour by the monks. Fleming, *Juana I.*, 22.
78 Molinet, *Chroniques*, 5:159–160.
79 Hochrinner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 45–46.
80 Balthasare Pusterla, Giasone dal Mayno, and Erasmo Brasca to Lodovico Sforza, Innsbruck?, 10 March 1494, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, fol. 70–71; Calco, 'Nuptiae augustae', 533.
81 Grohs, 'Italienische Hochzeiten', 340–343.
82 TLA, HS 5565, p. 1.
83 Such as Alfonso II's parents, Ercole II d'Este and Renée of France in 1528.
84 Coester, 'Crossing Boundaries', 11.
85 Köfler and Caramelle, *Die beiden Frauen*, 27–29.
86 Sigismondo de' Rossi to Francesco de' Medici, Innsbruck, 30 July 1565, ASFi, MdP 516a, fol. 947.
87 Gerald Schwedler, *Herrschertreffen des Spätmittelalters: Formen, Rituale, Wirkungen* (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2008), 305–310; Richardson, *The Field of Cloth of Gold*.
88 Chmel, *Actenstücke und Briefe*, 1:160.
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90 Chmel, *Actenstücke und Briefe*, 1:160.
91 Debris, *Tu felix Austria, nube*, 386–387; Hermann Wiesflecker, *Kaiser Maximilian I.: das Reich, Österreich und Europa an der Wende zur Neuzeit*, vol. 5 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1986), 132–133.
92 John Block Friedman, 'Dürer's Rhinoceros and What He or She Was Wearing: Carnations, Luxury Gardens, Identity Formation, and Urban Splendor, 1460–1550', *Journal of Material Culture* 20, no. 3 (2015): esp. 282.
93 Sam Segal and Klara Alen, *Dutch and Flemish Flower Pieces: Paintings, Drawings and Prints up to the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 58.
94 Molinet, *Chroniques*, 2:94–95.
95 Wiesflecker, *Kaiser Maximilian I.*, 1971, 1:131–132.
96 Fernand Mercier, 'La valeur symbolique de l'oeillet dans la peinture du Moyen-Age', *Revue de l'art* LXXI (137AD): 233–236; Marissa Bass, 'Workshop of Joos van Cleve, Portrait of Maximilian I (1459–1519), Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Antwerp, c. 1530', in *Early Netherlandish Paintings, Online coll. cat.*, ed. J.P. Filedt Kok (Amsterdam, 2010), hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.9629.

97 Pierre Terjanian et al., *The Last Knight: The Art, Armor, and Ambition of Maximilian I* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2019), 135.
98 Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 57.
99 Balthasare Pusterla, Giasone da Mayno, and Erasmo Brasca to Lodovico Sforza, 10 March 1494, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, fol. 70r.
100 *Narratione assai piu particolare della prima, del viaggio, et dell'entrata del Serenissimo Prencipe di Spagna, [...] con la Serenissima Regina*, ([Rome]: [1554?]), p. 5; Andrés Muñoz, *Viaje de Felipe Segundo á Inglaterra ... y relaciones varias relativas al mismo suceso*, ed. Pascual de Gayángos y Arce (Madrid: La sociedad de bibliofilos españoles, 1877), 70–72.
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103 Carafa, *De institutione vivendi*, 30–31.
104 Ibid., 34.
105 Kosior, 'First Meetings', 326–329.
106 Lubkin, *A Renaissance Court*, 53.
107 Given the variability of the personal pronouns (sua, sibi) in medieval Latin, there are different translations of the scene. It is possible that Authari touched Theodolinda's face or led her hand to touch his. However, since such an exchange would hardly go unnoticed, I chose to stick to the translation of William Dudley Foulke. See Paul the Deacon, *History of the Lombards*, ed. Edward Peters, trans. William Dudley Foulke (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 139.
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112 Warnicke, *The Marrying of Anne of Cleves*, 134, 137.
113 Daniel Nordman, 'Charles IX à Mézières: mariage, limites et territoire', *Cahiers Charles V* 4 (1983): 12–16.
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118 Watanabe-O'Kelly, '"Mit offentlich-ausgebrochenen Liebes=Thränen"'.
119 Elizabeth: *Kurtze Beschreibung deß Einzugs*, 1–2. Printed and translated in Mulryne, Watanabe-O'Kelly, and Shewring, *Europa Triumphans*, 1:394–397. Catherine: Orzechowski, *Panagyricus*, [e iii].
120 Pius II, *Historia austrialis*, 2009, 1:155–156.
121 Bianca: Balthasare Pusterla, Giasone dal Mayno, and Erasmo Brasca to Lodovico Sforza, Innsbruck?, 10 March 1494, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, fol. 70–71; Calco, 'Nuptiae augustae', 533. Margaret: Molinet, *Chroniques*, 5:68–69.
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6

'THE OCCASION OF THIS SORT PRESENTS ITSELF RARELY.' PRINCESS'S POWER AND AGENCY ON THE WAY

The previous chapter was heavily influenced by van Gennep's tripartite scheme of rites of passage, consisting of separation, margin, and incorporation; however, the focus was placed on the first and the third one. But how was the liminality present during the bridal transfer? This chapter will draw on the anthropological concept of liminality as established by Victor Turner, who, expanding on van Gennep's work, addressed this phase, marked by the crossing of a threshold.[1] He argues that

> liminality or of liminal *personae* ("threshold people") are necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and these persons elude or slip through the network of classification that normally locate states and positions in cultural space. Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial.[2]

Translated into our topic, the travelling princesses were moving within the sort of zero-zone: they were already segregated from their old family and not yet united with the new one. They left the old fatherly authority but had not yet entered that of the husband. The ambiguity connected with the bridal transfer thus opened a window of possibilities for the princess who could test her power and learn new abilities. Carafa's propositions about how the journey should serve as a preparation for the queenly role would thus be embedded in the very character of the transfer.

The rhetoric of medieval and early-modern sources (e.g. speaking about "delivering the bride", or "handover" in the previous chapter) as well as of modern scholarship (using terms such as the "marriage market"), albeit perhaps

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unintentionally, tends to reduce princely brides to a means of dynastic politics, to denote them as "sold daughters". This narrative was shaken up by Katherine Walsh who reacted to the book intended for a popular market entitled *Habsburgs verkaufte Töchter* ("the sold Habsburg daughters") by Thea Leitner, which circulated the idea, reinforced by feminist studies, that noble daughters were a compliant tool of male manoeuvring. Taking a number of various quickly sketched examples, Walsh demonstrates that many fifteenth-century women of the highest rank engaged in agile diplomacy, intervened in political and family matters, or actively collaborated in their own incorporation into the husband's environment.[3] Also playing upon Leitner's book title, Jörg Rogge expands upon Walsh's thesis, rebuffing the language of coercion and oppression when speaking about high-ranking women while also interpreting their precarious conditions in a more complex way. According to him, elite women were operating in a permanent state of tension between their individualities and expected social roles.[4]

The expression "sold daughters" irrefutably comes short of grasping the situation of late-medieval and early modern princesses. Since the 1980s and 1990s, queenship scholars have convincingly challenged Marion Facinger's thesis that the gradual bureaucratisation by the end of the thirteenth century stripped the queen of her public power and relegated her role to the private, ritual, or cultural sphere.[5] In fact, royal women could exert power, agency, and authority in many forms of the spectrum ranging from direct rule through various co-ruling systems to intercession and informal influence.[6] The level of the queen's agency depended on a whole range of factors, such as financial and political situation of her husband and natal family. Christina Lutter and Daniela Unterholzner, for instance, showed that Bianca Maria Sforza's failure cannot be blamed on her purported idleness, lack of wit, or inability to produce an heir to Maximilian I. Instead, her limited agency should be attributed to Maximilian's ineffective organisation and communication, lack of resources, as well as the lack of clear diplomatic purpose. Bianca Maria's dynastic ties, family and diplomatic networks could have been crucial for Maximilian for the acquisition of her natal duchy of Milan. But as this enterprise slowly broke down, so did the queen's role in foreign relations.[7] However, these, and many other studies proving and exploring queens' agency or operational space *(Handlungsraum)* concentrate on post-wedding life.[8] Can we trace a comparable level of agency during the spousal journey?

Generally speaking, scholarship has not seen a great level of power or agency in the princely brides during their transfers. Even most recently, María Cristina Quintero in her otherwise thought-provoking study on the relationship between space and female power contends that the travelling brides, albeit taking important lessons, "were nothing more than mere players, decorative movable statues, in a feast minutely choreographed by officials in charge of protocol".[9] Such a stance is well justified, especially if one concentrates on the

source material which highlights dynastic or urban messages displayed through pageantry and festive splendour. Logically, in such a context, the role of the young queen must be minimal. But even other types of sources do not give away much about the princess's behaviour or activities either. This is where the role of Carafa's manual is essential. Every piece of his advice presupposed the queen's capability for independent action not only after the post-wedding life but already during the transfer as a crucial period for the later life.

This section, drawing upon the unique manual book for the journey, Carafa's *De institutione*, examines the agency of the travelling princes/princesses and argues that the nuptial transfer was used as a self-training ground for the princely brides who, given the journey's liminality, could test their skills and powers. The educational purpose of the journeys has been partially examined by scholars, for instance, Felix Labrador Arroyo analysed the way in which the queen's entries to cities might have served as a means to present her and inaugurated her reign.[10] Similarly, Katarzyna Kosior traced how the wedding festivities instructed the queen about her new duties by visualising female virtues in various religious and historical figures.[11] However, no study has paid attention to the active role of the queen in the instructive process as it was laid out by Carafa's *De institutione*.

In previous chapters, we have seen Carafa's instructions regarding the comportment of the entourage or gestures during the farewell and the first meeting. Yet this was just a small portion from the main potential of the treatise which, in a sense, represents a real game changer: unlike other sources we possess, it stresses the role of the bride during the journey, endowing her with not only a list of jobs but also with the capacity to fulfil them. What were the tasks Carafa assigns to the princess? He brings up many issues, such as gift-giving, financial matters, the queen's entourage, correspondence, or language. All of these matters share one ultimate goal: they are a means by which the bride should win her husband's favour and acquire knowledge of his way of life. Using written communication she can keep in contact with her husband, assuring him of her love; by dealing responsibly with finances and the redistribution of gifts she can prove herself a good administrator; in relation to the husband's courtiers, sent to fetch her up and accompany her, she can show a due amount of deference and enquire about the husband's mores.

The list of activities the princess could engage in during the journey is long. But was any of this counsel actually followed, or alternatively, were they based on shared values of late-medieval society? Or were they only inventions and desiderata of the Neapolitan seneschal? As already shown in Introduction, Carafa's life and literary work would suggest that the former option is more likely. Having served his entire life the Aragonese kings of Naples, Alfonso I and Ferrante I, Carafa epitomised a faithful courtier and a man of many talents. As Carlo Vece argues, no other writer of the Renaissance period produces such an amount of spontaneity and necessary realism.[12]

We can thus presume that his manual, originally addressed to Beatrice of Naples [1476], was at least to some extent based on contemporary expectations. But that still does not answer the question: was any noble female figure acting in accordance with these guidelines? Did any princess utilise her wedding journey as a mode of self-instruction? By a close scrutiny of some aspects—management of the court and gaining favour, and language learning—this chapter shows that many aspects tackled by Carafa are traceable in the actual bridal transfer. Furthermore, it will be demonstrated that there were other spheres of this self-preparation which Carafa did not envisage at all but which were actively exercised by the travelling brides. On top of this, the gender differences in this process are also examined, demonstrating that travelling brides and grooms shared same amount of power and agency or, in other cases, incapacity in influencing the course of the journey. And lastly, activity of the wedding travellers can be seen in their encounter with people they run into, alas, the only language survived from this dialogue is gift-giving. The material objects, circulated in the course of the journey were by no means merely polite offerings—quite contrarily, they highlighted splendour of the event, and what is more, they materialised the bonds and relations established during interaction. The journey, again, was an ideal occasion to build as many new connections and relationships as possible, connections that were to be capitalised on in the future.

Getting into the role

As we have seen in Chapter 3, the group of people accompanying the prince(ss) to their spouse was of a massive quantity. The original, already huge entourage was often enlarged by the groom's embassy which was to perform the betrothal and the wedding by proxy in the bride's home country and then to accompany her back to the husband. This reception company was often the first contact the noble bride made with her husband's milieu in general. Carafa explicitly warns to treat every one of these envoys in a special way, the princess should win everybody over, if necessary by material means too.[13]

Generally, these envoys were sent not only to escort the princess but also to observe her mores and refer everything back to their lord. Sometimes, they were dispatched not as a numerous embassy but as individuals that were supposed to stay with the princess over a longer period of time and keep her in touch with the husband's court. Sigismondo de' Rossi arrived in Innsbruck at the beginning of July, more than five months before Joanna of Habsburg [1565] set off for Florence. As soon as he arrived, he dispatched a letter describing his first encounter with the future duchess:

> I did not neglect to let Her Majesty the Princess know […] that if it had pleased her, I would have come to serve her. She let me know that at

> that time she did not want that, but it would have pleased her instead if I rested a bit […] They [= the princesses] hear three or four Masses every morning, take part in the liturgy of hours and pray vespers and compline every day … which is not a little effort *(fastidio)*. Since I am new to this service, I cannot assess this in more detail.[14]

Two interesting points from this report stand out. First, the princess's behaviour towards the emissary of her husband seems to be defined by a great sense of magnanimity. She treats him in an honourable way, which can be called a random act of kindness: she gives him time to relax, arguably, with the intention in mind to make a favourable impression on him, that will be forwarded on to her husband.

Second, in forming his judgement on Joanna, de' Rossi was obviously not satisfied with the official news but actively solicited for the opinions of the courtiers. Apparently, the first, unfiltered image he got was hearsay about the princess's extreme religiosity, which is traditionally interpreted by scholars as a sign of bigotry, incompatible with the frivolous Florentine milieu.[15] In fact, descriptions of the bride's devoutness were desirable as they accounted for good manners and were by no means limited to the Habsburg princesses, renowned for their piety. For example, Polish envoys sent to fetch Bona Sforza [1518] up in Bari reported back to King Sigismund I of Poland about the future queen's behaviour during her journey and stated that she exhibited "innate and natural honesty". Although looking really tired Bona kept saying that she was not tired at all, quite the opposite, that she travelled with pleasure *("libenter")*. Her female retinue was reportedly so well-ordered and decent that it resembles a nunnery *("monasterium virginum")*.[16] As shown in Chapter 3 when discussing the female household, such characterisations were much sought-after as they would vindicate the queen from any suspicion of unchastity that would threaten the legitimacy of her offspring too.

Nonetheless, according to Carafa, the examination of morals should be a two-way stream and the queen should also learn the husband's manners, habits, and likings. To achieve that, she should use the contact with the foreign emissaries:

> During the journey, be curious to learn the king's nature and morals from the noblemen who would accompany You, so You would learn what he does like and what does not, before You start to live with him. This should be done during the journey, so [after the arrival] the noblemen could refer to the king how much You want to learn his ways—and I think nothing will please him more.[17]

Getting information about the husband's character during the journey was not only a means of extinguishing the princess's curiosity. Far more importantly,

it would give her a teaching material on how to live and how to adapt to the person with whom she was to form a familial and political relationship. In addition, according to Carafa, there is another benefit: courtiers would likely inform the king about her enthusiasm to know and please him, which would earn her additional good graces. Such a shrewd strategy seems almost irresistible to ignore, but did any princess ever use it—not only to familiarise themselves with their husband's ways but also to gain his favour by doing so?

We have certain pieces of evidence confirming that this was the case. Waiting for good weather in Calais, Anne of Cleves [1539] was keen to learn Henry VIII's favourite card game and English dining habits.[18] After reaching the port in Livorno, Eleanor of Portugal [1452] and her counsel decided to send Lanckman, one of Frederick III's orators in her retinue, to find his lord and to consult on the further course of events—whether the princess should stay in the port or should proceed to meet her husband. When Lanckman successfully fulfilled his mission, Eleanor "diligently and boldly" asked him about the health of the emperor and whether Lanckman had related to him the events of the journey, and whether Frederick had shown any compassion for this. Lanckman replied that he did not only retell everything to the emperor but also Frederick allegedly burst into tears out of "great love".[19]

An even more detailed depiction of princess inquiring about the groom stems from the meeting of Eleanor of Habsburg [1561] with the Mantuan envoy Annibale Cavriani, whose reports were heavily used in Chapter 2. Writing to his master about the bride's physical appearance, Cavriani describes his conversation with the princess:

> The most serene Lady asked me about the nature of Your Excellency [= Duke Guglielmo] since she had been imagining him. I replied with those words which Your Excellency had instructed me to say, whereupon Her Highness [= Eleanor] replied [asking] what is up to her to do. I told her [everything] because Her Highness is a woman and a stranger; [she said] that if Your Excellency will be a good and loving [husband], she will be a loving and obedient [wife], and that Your Excellency can be sure that he will have as a wife the best and the most beautiful of all the sisters, and that she stays without [Your] sweet company only with heavy heart […] [Afterwards] she asked me to let Your Excellency know everything that she told me.[20]

In getting the knowledge of her upcoming spouse, each of these three princesses chose a different way. Whereas Eleanor of Portugal enquires only about the husband's health and reaction to her travel calamities, Anne of Cleves and Eleanor of Habsburg made a conscious effort to learn her spouse's character, customs, or favourite pastime. The last one did so explicitly to let her groom know that she is doing this, in order to shape herself as a perfect match and caring wife.

As the above-mentioned example of Bona Sforza [1518] reveals, the husband's envoys kept observing the bride over the course of the wedding transfer as well. De' Rossi, accompanying Joanna [1565], refers from Bologna that "Her Majesty is in good health and very good spirits, she does nothing else but ask me when we will arrive in Florence, not thinking anymore of Innsbruck".[21] Naturally, it is highly arguable whether these reports reflect the seen reality or if the Florentine emissary slightly sugar-coated them in order to fulfil the prince's expectations. I believe that it reflects at least the princess's effort to make a favourable impression on her new subjects and by extension on her husband. On the other hand, Joanna's sister Barbara, married the same year to the duke of Ferrara, probably wanted a chance to interact with her husband's envoys but was not given this opportunity. Only a month before the departure for Ferrara, she received a messenger and letter from her husband

> that consoled her a great deal, because—as I have heard from good places—it seems that she was dissatisfied by such a delay of Your Excellency in sending her a gentleman to stay here with her, especially when the excellent lord of Florence did so many months ago [for her sister].[22]

Evidently, Barbara was disappointed that her sister had been delegated a special emissary who could keep her in contact with her future husband and who, as we will see later on, could teach her Italian. Unlike Joanna, however, Barbara actively engaged in a letter exchange with Alfonso, as the collection of correspondence from the Modena state archives reveals.[23] The first letter, dated June 19, reacts to Alfonso's message, expressing joy at their engagement and her willingness to enter into marriage. Her following letters have a similar tenor: in a letter from July 13, Barbara is pleased to hear that Alfonso will visit her in Innsbruck;[24] on August 30 she thanks him for keeping her posted about his journey to Vienna.

Nonetheless, as time goes by, the messages start to feature more concrete matters: in an epistle from September 4, Barbara explores the possibility of inviting her sister Eleanor, at that time duchess of Mantua, to the nuptials. Conversely, Alfonso begins to use Barbara as an intermediary between him and the imperial court—he sends her a packet to be forwarded to the ambassador in Vienna (September 4) and Barbara furthers back to Ferrara a dispatch from Vienna (October 1). The princess maintains correspondence with the spouse even during the journey: in the letter from November 21, she thanks Alfonso for sending his brother, Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, who was to perform the delivery ceremony in Trent and to consign the gifts. In the letter dated October 1, Barbara writes,

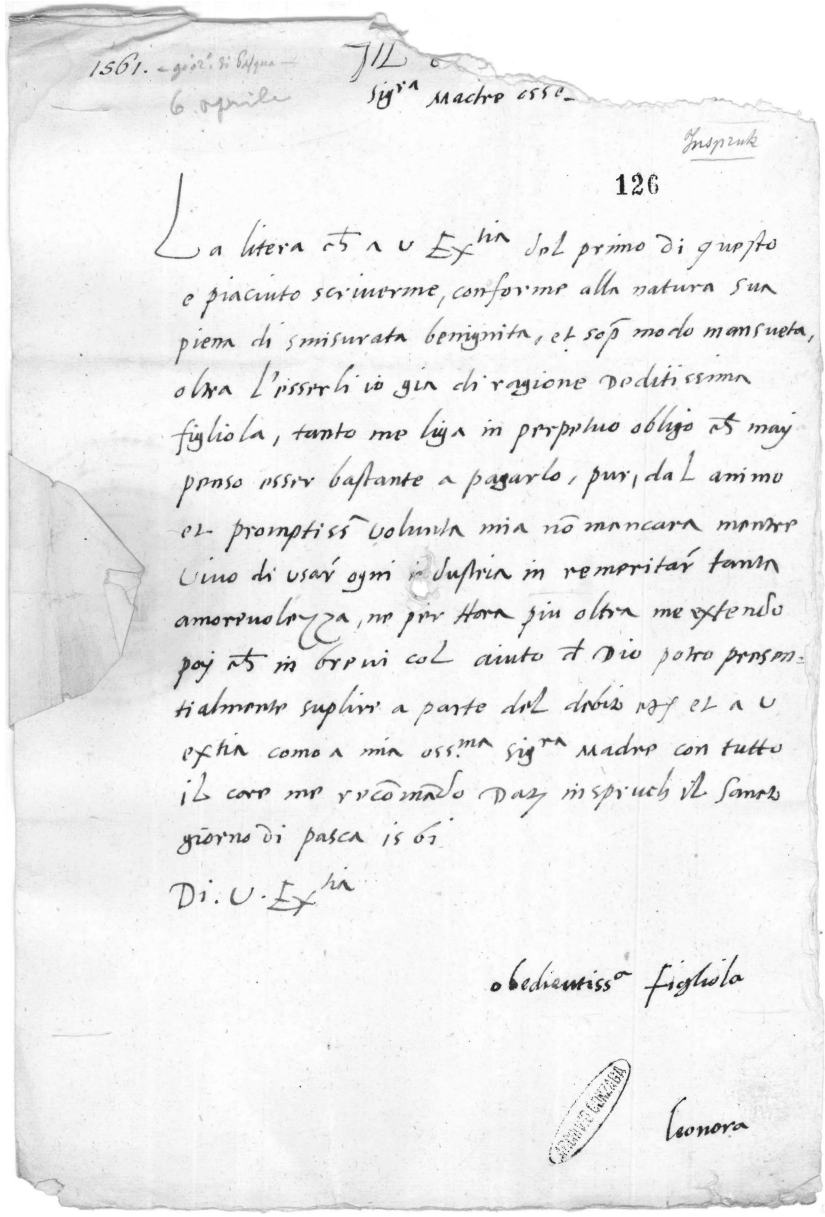
> […] I thought I would do a thing not unpleasant to Your Excellency if I, in these few words, would notify You how—by the grace of the lord, our

> God—I am healthy, hoping that the same applies for Your Excellency. I recommend myself from my heart to Your Excellency, wishing you every kind of prosperity. […]
>
> The loving bride *(amorevole sposa)* of Your Excellency.[25]

What might be seen as a tedious exchange of pleasantries and platitudes is actually a sophisticated process, if viewed within Carafa's logic. According to *De institutione*, the queen should regularly write letters during the journey, either to her husband, mother-in-law, family members, or the pope. The main point of doing so is the construction of the queen's prestige, especially in the eyes of her husband and mother-in-law. There is also a practical side to this, so the king would be well-informed about the progress of the journey.[26] Engaging in a formal or informal correspondence with family members or other influential personages, seeking and providing pieces of information, or acting as a negotiator was one of the most important tasks for a woman of high rank,[27] hence doing the first steps prior to or during the wedding transfer would be highly desirable training for the future role of the princely consort.

Barbara's above-quoted letter is proof that the princesses used correspondence to curry favour with their future spouses, manifesting servility and loyalty. Furthermore, this message attests to the fact that these acts were driven by her personal biddings—aside from the wording "I thought" that strongly hints that, there is an aspect lost in translation, namely, that all letters sent by Barbara to Alfonso were written in not very good Italian and probably by her own hand, as the shaky and non-polished handwriting would suggest. Since four of the eight letters concerned possess corrected draft versions, it is plausible that someone was also proofreading the princess's letters. All things considered, the amount of care—frequency of letter exchange, choice of the husband's language, personal execution of the handwriting—which Barbara spent in pursuit of this action is strong evidence that she was consciously following a procedure that was to put her in her husband's good graces.

By no means was Barbara the only princess to use correspondence as an act of subservience and deference in the language of her future relatives. For example, her sister Eleanor [1561], too, sent numerous letters to her husband Guglielmo, also by her own hand and in Italian, signing herself as *amantissima* or *observantissima sposa*.[28] In this, Eleanor could capitalise on her better linguistic competence, because, as the Mantuan envoy Vivaldini stated, she "understand and speaks Italian quite well".[29] On top of that, she also got in touch with his mother-in-law, Margaret Paleologa, expressing her perpetual obligation as a most dedicated daughter (Figure 6.1).[30] Such a wording was precisely in line with Carafa's counsel and it later paid off later on as Margaret probably did offer useful guidance and instruction to Eleanor.[31] Likewise, Guglielmo and Eleanor did not exchange only mutual pleasantries but communicated about very practical matters as well, such as the date of Eleanor's solemn entry to Mantua.[32]



1561. – giorno di Pasqua –
6 aprile

Ill.ma
Sig.ra Madre oss.a

Inspruck

126

La litera de V. Ex.tia del primo di questo
e piaciuto scriverme, conforme alla natura sua
piena di smisurata benignita, et soa modo mansueta,
oltra l'esserli io gia di ragione dedittissima
figliola, tanto me liga in perpetuo obligo de may
poriso esser bastante a pagarlo, pur, da l'animo
et prompti.ssa voluntà mia no mancara mentre
viuo di usar ogni iustitia in remeritar tanta
amorevolezza, ne per hora piu oltra me extendo
poi de in breui col aiuto di Dio potro presen-
tialmente supplire a parte del debito mio et a V.
ex.tia como a mia oss.ma sig.ra Madre con tutto
il core me recomando. Da Inspruch il Santo
giorno di pasca 1561

Di V. Ex.tia

obedientiss.a figliola

Leonora

FIGURE 6.1 The letter of Eleanor of Habsburg to her mother-in-law, Margaret Paleologa, Innsbruck, 6 April 1561. ASMn, AG 430, dossier X, f. 126. With the kind permission of the Archivio di stato di Mantova.

The princess answered by humble apology, saying that she would like to fulfil the duke's wishes but it is beyond her power as the whole process was already set in motion.[33] It is questionable to what extent the princess could carry out this task but it is intriguing that Guglielmo at least thought so, and Eleanor did not want to lose her husband's good graces.

The letters of the bride to the groom are dominated by expressions of respect and subservience that had a clear objective: to gain the husband's favour. A strikingly different tone was used in the correspondence to other personages, such as to family members. The contrast between styles is evident in the journey-written communication of Bianca Maria Sforza [1493]. Her one and only letter to Maximilian I prior to their encounter is written in a similar tenor to the letters of the Habsburg princesses quoted above: she cannot express her thankfulness for the love Maximilian showed to her nor express the joy in her soul.[34] On the other hand, Bianca's letters to her sister Anna, duchess of Ferrara, present a totally different picture. She portrays narrow and snowy roads in Alps which forced her to walk, talks about places with lousy accommodation or the reverse, about places abundant with good food and wine, while not being silent about her feelings of sadness and loneliness in a foreign land:

> The night afterwards, one could hear in the chamber the most frightful wind and I was terrified when the light went off. You can imagine, most beloved sister, how was my heart [filled with terror]: being deprived of the company of people, in foreign lands, and not able to have light, so I cried a lot.[35]

Clearly, the princess modulated her writing style to family and husband. Although the family is given an exaggerated account of her travel hardships,[36] the latter is approached with a significant amount of reverence, precisely in terms of Carafa's counsel—to keep in touch with the family and to win the husband over. This sort of correspondence, especially the one to the husband, could be considered an important method for the princess's self-instruction, her first step in defining her relationship with a new authority.

Yet, the attitude of reverence and the assurances of love were not the sole aim of the mail communication that Carafa had in mind. It was the princess' duty to act as an intermediary in the eventual disputes between the courtiers from her homeland and the new ones, to treat everybody in a friendly manner, especially those who are to be assigned to her by the husband. In case a member of her train loses a horse, she should reimburse him or her; if somebody is sick she should personally visit such an individual or take care that he or she will be visited in the princess' name.[37]

Unfortunately, no consulted material bears witness to the fact if a princess played the role of mediator. Yet we do possess some episodes proving that she kept an eye on the entourage members during the journey. A young countess in the retinue of Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452] passed out during a sea storm.

Immediately afterwards, the future empress proposed to make a sacred vow of sending two men for an expiatory pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostella. But this action seems to be addressing the overall critical situation rather than the case of the sick damsel.[38] However, when Filipa, another lady in Eleanor's company, fell from horse and broke her leg, the princess ordered to carry her in her personal litter.[39] During Bianca Maria's voyage [1493] *madonna* Michela also could not go ahead due to exhaustion and had to stay behind. In her case, the princess personally weighed in *(ne ha dato gran carico)* and recommended Michela to be accepted into the ladies' court of Bianca's mother.[40] An even greater act of compassion is recorded for Barbara of Habsburg [1565]. The Venetian ambassador Contarini tells a story that as the princess was about to make her final entry to Ferrara, she heard that one of the local noblewomen in her company was pregnant and had just started to go into labour. Barbara reportedly immediately left her chambers to help her, saying that she wished to help with sisterly *amorevolezza e carità*.[41] These short episodes survived because of the simple fact—they describe accidents or issues that complicated the journey's progress. There might have been many others, which were not recorded, because they were not important enough. But this scarce evidence shows that the princess was involved in the care for her close companions—or at least the stories were told they had done so—sometimes by direct aid and in other instances by securing the lady's future within another court.

Carafa indeed devised the long list of tasks, yet there were still some possibilities as to how the queen could have used her bridal journey to train herself for the future role, which he does not envisage at all. Adding to her general erudition, the princess could enquire about the history and geography of the cities and places she was passing. On her way to Hungary, Anne of Foix [1502] reportedly asked her hosts in Brescia to tell her about "memorable things regarding this city". Unfortunately, the record does not state the hosts' full answer, but the Brescia burghers obviously did not miss showing the princess their armory, which was capable of providing various arms for twenty thousand men. When visiting Venice a couple of days later Anne went to see the famous Arsenal, the collection of shipyards and armories.[42]

Another option was the maintenance of family memory and intercession. Both efforts are quite vividly described in Lanckman's description of Eleanor of Portugal's journey [1451/1452]. As the bridal company departed from Lisbon, it sailed along the coastline, and having passed Gibraltar it made a stop in the Portuguese-occupied city of Ceuta in Africa. During her stay in the city, Eleanor visited a garden where she planted with her own hands a little tree, saying that she did so in memory of herself. Afterwards, she entrusted the care of the tree to a local gardener, paying him one ducat for this service. A couple of days later, the captain of Ceuta went on a military expedition, and having victoriously come back, he brought a rich booty and many captured "pagans". Eleanor, seeing that, ordered—in her name and for the memory of hers—the captives to be set free.[43] Both episodes illustrate the ways in which the future

empress engaged in the preservation of memory. For a long time now, scholars have recognised the crucial role queens played in maintaining dynastic memory: on the one side, by patronage of the visual, sculptural, or literary arts, they were erecting lasting monuments to the living and dead.[44] On the other, queens initiated an active process of remembrance by funding religious rituals or public celebrations.[45] It can be argued that this is precisely what Eleanor was doing with the acts which—according to her (and Lanckman)—were performed in order to memorialise her. By utilising both material (the tree) and immaterial (mercy for the prisoners) vehicles, she consciously erected a living monument to her deeds, which is the job she will be later responsible for executing for the entire family.

Another vital trait is Eleanor's intervention in releasing prisoners. Intercession was one of the key duties of medieval and early modern queens and it can be understood as a form of co-rulership of the royal couple.[46] Due to various biblical models, it was an expected role for the queen and Eleanor was not a unique princess who embraced to the identity of intercessor already on the way to her husband. Others did so as well, although not directly but by via correspondence. Bianca Maria Sforza did not intercede in Gravedona on behalf of her lady Michela only. Upon arrival to the town, Bianca was given a petition by a certain Abbondio and his associates from Torno. Immediately, she forwarded it with an accompanying letter to Lodovico Sforza, her uncle and de facto ruler of Milan, stating that she deems that it "should be deemed honest and deserve appropriate measure".[47] Unfortunately, the attached petition has not survived so we do not know the exact matter at stake. Similarly, Elizabeth and Anne of Habsburg [both 1570] were imploring the relevant authorities by correspondence, either the local one or their future consorts, for releasing people whose relatives approached them during the journey. Elizabeth interceded on behalf of a certain Marie Kisin's husband at the bishop of Strasbourg who had been shortly her travel companion.[48] Travelling through the Netherlands, Anne was approached by the associates of baron Montigny, imprisoned by Philip II. Paradoxically, it caused the baron's execution as Philip put him to death because he would not be able to refuse the princess's intervention.[49]

Learning language

After discussing the non-Carafa ways of queenly self-training let us go back to *De institutione* and one of the most interesting points of this treatise, that is, the issue of language. The inability to speak in the same language as her husband and his subjects was often a cause of distress for princesses. Language incompetence might have resulted in negative sentiments on the part of subjects or it might have caused an estrangement in the marital life of the princely couple. Carafa foresaw this, saying that unless the queen learns the language of her new kingdom there is no doubt she will encounter many troubles in dealing with everyday matters either with the husband or the people in her proximity,

especially ladies-in-waiting.[50] As a remedy to this, he suggests using the bridal journey as a starting point of language instruction:

> Therefore, every day during the journey [you should] command somebody from those who would accompany you, somebody who is well-versed in the language, to teach you something [from the language]. And thus after you arrive to the kingdom you will [continue to] learn more easily from the damsels who will be in your service.[51]

The queen should thus take advantage of two factors of the journey: first, the presence of (in Beatrice's case) Hungarian native speakers in the bridal train, and second, the long duration of the journey to begin learning the language.

But was this counsel ever followed? Did any queen use her bridal journey to acquire knowledge of her husband's language? These questions are extremely difficult to answer as we possess only a little direct evidence. Nicolas Lanckman informs us that Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452] began to learn German already in Lisbon, after she had met with the envoys of her future husband, soon-to-be Emperor Frederick III.[52] Lanckman, however, immediately after goes on to say that she could not acquire much German, being hindered with other more pressing issues. But she was determined to proceed with diligent learning during the sea voyage to Italy where she was to meet Frederick.[53] We do not know whether she actually did so, as Lanckman's diary never raises the issue of language again. But Eleanor's correspondence from her later years shows that if not during the journey then definitely after her arrival she became well-versed in German.[54] In the end, Carafa does not insist that the queen should learn the language during the journey perfectly, he simply says that the journey is an ideal time to start the process, given the accessibility of potential tutors and abundance of spare time.

Lanckman's report provides us with another important detail. The princess started to learn only after she had met with the ambassadors. It is thus possible that the arrival of the Germans not only inspired this process but also provided the princess with actual tutors in the language, since distant Portugal might have been quite deficient in providing qualified German teachers. That brings us to the actual way in which the language instruction was to be carried out. In those regions of the medieval world that lacked multi-ethnic communities, vibrant mercantile movements (the Low Countries and parts of Italy), or a tradition of schoolbook literature (such as late medieval England and France), it was sometimes quite difficult to acquire the linguistic competence other than Latin. With only a handful of travelogues that could have included a phrase or two in the foreign language, it always came down to personal interaction. This might have taken the form of travel to the far-off region, or of a meeting with the foreign-speaking agents, be they merchants, pilgrims, or ambassadors.[55]

On top of that, by the 1500s, even the most educated princes did not usually learn languages (other than Latin), unless there was a specific reason such as marital union with the external dynasty. Even in that case the instruction was very rudimentary, probably based on translating the foreign texts.[56] If one, either of noble or common origin, wanted to learn the language properly, it was necessary to spend some time abroad. Elena Taddei has demonstrated how the Este archive in Ferrara is swollen with the letters of German princes recommending their subjects or courtiers, eager to learn Italian, for ducal protection.[57] It seems that in the end, the personal interaction with the foreign-speaking environment was a crucial condition for acquiring the language.

That is why Eleanor could have started her linguistic preparation only after she was given a way to do so—the actual speakers and tutors in one person. The presence of foreign figures was not a facilitating condition; it was an essential one. This is probably why the court ordinance for the journeys of Anne of Bohemia and Mary of Hungary [1521] orders one or two French-speaking ladies-in-waiting from Mary's entourage to swap places with one or two Hungarian-speaking ladies-in-waiting from Anne's.[58] Even though these two princesses lived for several years after the wedding arrangement at the First Vienna Congress (1515) together in Innsbruck, and most likely the linguistic interaction went on for some time, it was still deemed necessary to include a foreign-speaking companion for the princesses' journeys to their husbands, most likely as a means to practise the language on a daily basis. A much later evidence—from Margaret of Habsburg's journey [1598]—corroborate this: in her case, the Spanish-speaking ladies from Vienna court were chosen in order to help the princess with linguistic training on the way to Spain.[59]

These examples may indicate that there was at least a general sentiment that it would be convenient for the princess to get some rudiments of the language en route. Nevertheless, the language issues were usually not part of marital contracts, so technically nothing legally bound the princess to acquire such a skill. If one side of the marital union did not ask for it—as in the above-mentioned case of Margaret [1598] or of Catherine of Aragon when the English demanded the young princess would be trained in French by her sister-in-law, Margaret of Habsburg[60] (again the presence of a foreign individual is needed)—it would have fallen to each individual princess to either acquire the knowledge of language, rely on their knowledge of Latin, or use an interpreter. Bianca Maria Sforza [1493/1494] communicated with Maximilian via an intermediary (e.g. a secretary),[61] Joanna of Castile [1496] probably through Latin, in which the princess was so well-versed that she could answer by herself the formal oration addressed to her.[62]

What did linguistic training look like? Catherine of Valois in Shakespeare's *Henry V* begs of her lady-in-waiting Alice to teach her some English as the older damsel has been in England and speaks the language quite well. Yet this lesson proves itself to be totally useless since the French princess demands to

hear only the English expressions for the body parts, which naturally results in her total unpreparedness in a real-time dialogue with her groom.[63] Naturally, given the genre of the source, Catherine's language instruction can hardly depict the actual practice since it was written for theatrical effect. Still, by raising the language issue, Shakespeare might have attempted to humanise the political union, to portray its personal and practical implications which often brought a heavy sacrifice.[64] However, it does convey the necessity of personal interaction in language acquisition.

FIGURE 6.2 Maximilian I's semi-authobiografic work *Weißkunig* pays great attention to ways by which the prince acquired foreign languages (Slavic, Spanish, Dutch, English, Italian). In this scene, Mary of Burgundy teaches Maximilian French. Leonhard Beck, *Weißkunig*, woodcut, 1514–1517. Albertina, Vienna, invent. no. DG2012/129/45.

Fortunately, we are not left with dramatic portrayals. Sigismondo de' Rossi, a Florentine envoy, refers to Francesco de' Medici about the communication he had with the prince's bride-to-be, Joanna of Habsburg [1565] in Innsbruck, a couple of months before their wedding. For the first time, the princess and the envoy met

> in their gardens, where they [= the courtiers] went every night to get a bit of cold air after dinner. Keeping her promise, Her Majesty gave me *buona sera* and then she said to me I am *benvenuto* in Italian. Then, [speaking in German] she had the Lord Steward tell me that she would not continue speaking further, being afraid I would tease and make fun of her. I encouraged her to continue speaking with me in Italian, which made her say that she would like to give me the honour to speak with me every time I would come to make her company—and [to speak] as many Italian words as I would say to Her Majesty in German. I agreed to this and every evening […] we engaged in dialogue in such a way that would make Your Excellency [= Francesco de' Medici] laugh a lot, if You were present.[65]

We can see that a language interaction again began shortly after the ambassador's arrival and that the instruction started with small steps, the ten words the princess vowed to learn. Unlike Shakespeare's Catherine of Valois, Joanna's choice of real-life greetings might have served her well in a conversation. The frequency of language learning, and the use of the foreign courtiers in doing so, is precisely what Carafa had in mind writing his counsels. There are hints that the language interaction of Joanna with Sigismondo de' Rossi continued once she embarked upon her voyage: in a letter to his master, de' Rossi apologises for not writing more frequently because, as he rather mysteriously puts it, he did not have "an opportunity [to do so] since Her Highness [=Joanna] does not allow me to return to my quarters until she goes to bed".[66] Were they practising Italian? There is no reason to doubt that.

Nevertheless, Carafa's counsel was also meant more generally: language was not only a means of communication but also a very visible sign of culture and identity. By embracing it the princess manifested her will to be a part of the husband's society and culture. Failing to do or even more, creating one's own cultural ghetto consisting of fellow-countrymen courtiers, could have led to much marital discord and ultimately resulted in a political crisis. One good example of this could be Renée of France (1510–1574) who retained an expensive French court long after her marriage to Ercole II of Ferrara (1508–1559). Despite initial promises, she preferred the French fashion over Italian and communicated in French or through an interpreter. As Elena Taddei argues, this attitude might have expressed both the protection of Renée's strong cultural identity and on the other side the awareness of her superiority in rank over her husband since she married well below her status.[67]

This might have been a reason why many princely women retained their native language—it was an indicator of their cultural and hierarchical identity. That is something Carafa strongly opposed, as he advocated that the queen should try to subordinate herself totally to the husband's will. In other words, the learning of language was not only useful for practical purposes but could also serve as a means to acquire the husband's good grace. This is also the sense we get from Rossi's encounters with Joanna of Habsburg [1565], as in one other letter she purportedly thanks Francesco for sending Rossi to her as a sign of affection.[68] She clearly entertains the Florentine envoy—and by extension, the young Medici—with some language conversation because she tries to win him over.

And that is exactly what Carafa meant by his language counsel for the journey: to show the husband's willingness, to send a message of subordination to his will, to manifest her openness to embrace a new culture and family. That was a sort of preparation the princess could have been actively involved in during the journey, and it fits well within his overall plan for the princess to search for the husband's good graces.

Power and agency

Thus far, we have seen many spheres of the princess's activity, yet one might argue that these were limited to her own sphere but did not have a direct impact on her wider surroundings. Was the princess's voice heard during the transfer? Did it make difference? Some sources suggest that the princesses had, if not a final, then at least a strong say on different matters arising on the road. This is clearly visible for Joanna of Habsburg [1565] who is many times shown making decisions that altered or might have altered the course of the journey: in Mantua, the count of Mirandola invited her to his town but she excused herself and opted to visit a nearby monastery instead.[69] Several days afterwards, the princess was so determined to inspect another monastic site that the entire bridal train had to travel with lanterns in darkness.[70] Finally, leaving Mantua, Duke Guglielmo reportedly wanted to accompany Joanna for a longer distance but the princess "did not consent to it, saying that she did not want it out of love towards the lady duchess [= of Mantua, Eleanor of Habsburg, Joanna's elder sister] who was pregnant".[71]

Another important hint presents itself with Margaret of Habsburg's [1497] sojourn in Southampton where the fleet transporting her to Spain had to take shelter from a terrible storm. As soon as King Henry VII learned about the princess's docking, he sent court officials to welcome her, and furthermore, he wrote two letters inviting her to stay in the port as long as she needed, with a postscript that if she indeed decided to stay longer, she should let him know so he could visit her personally.[72] Rather than approaching Fadrique Enríquez de Velasco, the admiral of the fleet, the Tudor monarch addresses the princess

directly and clearly, he is deeming her someone who is in charge, at least in some respects. Even if this argument can be rebuffed on the grounds that it was more well-mannered to address the princess rather than the admiral, it still puts the bride at the centre of the decision-making, since, at the very least, she had to communicate the will of the host to the navy's commander. Naturally, Margaret—and Joanna too—was not personally commanding every move of the armada (or entourage, in Joanna's case) or involved in the overall planning of the route, but the princess's will was considered as a decisive factor in some instances. These moments could cover situations caused by objective reasons, such as adverse weather (Margaret's unplanned stop in England), but they could originate from the princess's subjective motivations that might have resulted in small alternations of the itinerary (Joanna's choice of visiting the shrine instead of the nobleman). After all, it is not so important whether the princesses actually used their power—the important fact is that they clearly possessed it. As Theresa Earenfight pointed out, power can also be latent and not realised.[73] Also, the princess's power en route cannot be measured according to the men planning the transfer or commanding the military escorts. Similarly, as in the monarchical system in general, queens expressed their power differently but in collaboration with the males.[74] Travelling brides and their male escorts—either generals, admirals, uncles, or brothers—are another example of corporative monarchy, a working partnership that constituted rulership.[75] The studied sample of weddings unfortunately does not allow for a deeper understanding of this dynamics; however, future research could shed more light on it.

The relatively great freedom of operation the travelling brides possessed strongly contrasts with the male journeys. Self-training process as envisaged by Carafa and discussed in the earlier part of the chapter is hardly traceable in the male voyages. The absence of such training might seem logical and in line with Carafa's and wider contemporary views on the subjected role of woman. Still, one would expect the grooms, given their gender, to have had greater autonomy in their actions than their female counterparts. Yet at least for the journeys of Maximilian I and II [1477 and 1548] this is not the case at all. According to the later source called *Ehrenspiegel des Hauses Österreich*, commissioned by the Fugger family in the mid-sixteenth century, Maximilian I waited in Cologne until Mary of Burgundy sent him funds (100 thousand ducats) and letters commanding him to meet her in Ghent. The allocation of this substantial amount of money allegedly made Mary's mother-in-law state that Maximilian's father, Emperor Frederick III, "is cheap".[76] Although the transfer of finances is documented by the contemporary sources as well,[77] the entire episode definitely does not cast Maximilian in a dominant position or present him in the masculine ideal. Given the character of the *Ehrenspiegel*, aiming to memorise the famous deeds of the House of Habsburg, this might have been a deliberate strategy to emphasise the dynasty's rise to glory from humble origins.

Maximilian II [1548] presents an even more distinct example. Even though we can trace his agency in gift-giving, as it will be shown later, or staffing his noble entourage (see Chapter 3), one episode from the sea leg of his journey reveals that he did not possess a greater authority than his female counterparts. When passing Marseille, which was a French territory, the prince's armada was on the brink of armed conflict. At this time, relations between the Habsburgs and the French were tense again as the ten-year Truce of Nice from 1538, that had put an end to the Italian wars, did not last and both sides renewed fighting already in 1542–1544.[78] According to Besozzi's chronicle, at first, multiple gifts and acts of friendship were exchanged between Maximilian and the French, but this allegedly made Leone Strozzi, a commander of the French fleet stationed there, very jealous. Strozzi first issued a rather hostile welcome statement to the Habsburg fleet, delineating a very strict route that the imperials had to follow in order to avoid a cannonade from the fortresses. However, one Habsburg galley, not knowing about the set boundaries, made too deep an incursion into the port, and as a result cannons from the nearby fortress were fired and the main sail of the ship was hit. Having heard this, Andrea Doria, the commander of the imperial fleet, was angered and wanted to retaliate. Only the swift intervention of Cristoforo Madruzzo, Cardinal of Trent, who said that they had not come here to start a war but to conduct successfully the young prince to the wedding, calmed Doria's passions and prevented an imminent battle.[79]

What is stunning about this episode is not the Franco-Habsburg hostility but rather the strange behaviour of the young Habsburg. Even after Strozzi's cold welcome, Maximilian reportedly remained "quite stunned and let the prince of Doria speak with his eyes pointed at him".[80] Then, Maximilian was totally side-lined after the firing upon the galley, which can be partly explained by the fact that he might not have been on the same ship as Admiral Doria was but nor was the cardinal! Besozzi explicitly states that Madruzzo immediately boarded a boat and made it to the admiral's ship just in time to intervene. Although the cardinal's emotional speech ("To prove I am not speaking out of cowardliness, I am ready to attack the French the first, to win or to die!") could have been exaggerated by Besozzi, who was on the cardinal's payroll,[81] it remains clear that Maximilian does not seem to exert any action in the decision-making, and what is more, his opinion is not even sought after.

Social networking

Another sphere of influence for the nuptial travellers were the people they ran into when traversing great distances. Due to the very character of the bridal journeys with its convoluted logistics and increasing festivisation, but also, perhaps, stirred by personal motivations, princes and princesses were not silent by-passers but actively interacted with the environment and its inhabitants. Carafa in his instructional treatise addresses numerous instances during

which the queen could make personal contact with particular individuals. For instance, he presupposes that Beatrice of Aragon [1476 would pay a visit to her sister Eleanor, married to the duke of Ferrara, and he instructs the queen to consult on the details of the visit with the husband's reception delegation.[82] Then, the sojourn in Rome—which eventually did not happen, as Beatrice took a naval route instead—ought to be used for forging bonds with the pope. The princess is supposed to deliver a speech, expressing joy at meeting the "dearest friend of both Your father and husband". The audience with the pope, however, should not be limited to the exchange of pleasantries: the princess should strive to obtain papal indulgence and to receive the sacrament of the Eucharist from the pope's hands, both of which were very powerful vehicles of personal piety. Yet there is another option for how Beatrice could profit from her acquaintance with the supreme pontiff: she should exhort him to support an unspecified "liberating expedition", probably a crusade against the Turks, and what is more, she should stand in as a temporary envoy of her husband in case he asks her for some matter to be processed.[83]

The princess's influence should not stop at the pope. On the contrary, perhaps even greater attention ought to be given to dealing with cardinals in Rome. A counsel regarding this sort of encounter reflects Carafa's many years of diplomatic experience and cunning:

> It is thus necessary to pay attention to the cardinals' conduct: each of them, and especially in Rome, lays no lesser claim [to everything] than kings usually do in their realms. Hence, Your Majesty cannot by any means offend any of them by keeping them waiting [to meet you]; You should not only kindly speak to every one of them but also go a great distance ahead to meet them. […] Because the cardinals are from diverse nations, they will give testimony about Your life and morals in their respective countries.[84]

After giving warning about the cardinals' pretentiousness, the canny Neapolitan seneschal basically encourages the queen to give the prelates precedence, i.e. to lower her status in exchange for international reputation, as the college of cardinals consisted not only of Italians but also of clergymen from all around Europe who kept very vivid correspondence with their native regions. Carafa, nonetheless, does not only stress the importance of meetings with prominent persons, in fact, he goes far beyond that: the princess ought to make a good impression on everybody to whom she will encounter on the way because it is a unique opportunity to show "excellent and outstanding innate qualities […] to many people".[85] In general, meeting individuals is yet another sort of strategy in Carafa's overarching plan, visible in almost every counsel he gives, according to which the princess ought to build her prestige throughout the journey because it is a unique opportunity to interact with so many regions and

their inhabitants. This view puts the entire phenomenon of wedding travel into a new perspective—it is no longer only a dynastic festivity but an event that propelled individualised goals.

Again, however, we are faced with the same old dilemma—was this Carafa-envisaged plan somehow based in practice, i.e. did it reflect a contemporary custom, or was it only his wishful thinking? Despite the extensive number of sources, the description of prince(sse)s' face-to-face interaction with common or noble people is rather rare. The financial log of Maximilian II's ride to Castile [1548] contains many entries showing the prince attributing a small sum to people he serendipitously ran into: for instance, prior to Innsbruck, he met "some females" to whom gave one crown (equal to one gulden and thirty kreutzers); in Valenza in Italy, Maximilian gave orders to award three guldens to a barefooted monk and thirty guldens to a woman for some unspecified aid in Barcelona.[86] Almost on a daily basis, the young Habsburg was leaving *Letzgeld*, a farewell tip, for accommodation and breakfast provided to him by innkeepers in minor towns. Often the administrators of these inns were females (e.g. in Sterzing or Colma, both in Tyrol before Bolzano; or in Bujalaroz, a town between Leida and Zaragoza in modern Spain).[87] Concurrently the auxiliary staff, such as chamberlains, porters, servants, and waiters at taverns or lodgings, were remunerated, unsurprisingly, in much less generous fashion than their masters.[88] An account book from the journey of Maximilian's daughter Elizabeth [1570] shows the same pattern, sometimes leaving a farewell tip in the form of cash, sometimes as a golden cup.[89]

Another group Maximilian encountered was the group of people taking care of his entertainment, namely singers, musicians, dancers, and jesters. As the prince's entourage seems to lack artisans of any sort, performers responsible for his enjoyment had to be recruited ad hoc from the towns and villages he passed. In bigger cities, the preparation of entertainment was done side by side to the organisation of festivities, so, for instance, the Mantuans employed jesters from relatively distant Piedmont, but also smaller towns such as Ala in the Trentino region did not hesitate to hire violinists from Ferrara to provide company for the travelling archduke.[90] Sometimes, Maximilian generously tipped unforeseen funny acts, such as in Genoa, where "one seafarer climbed the main mast of the galley and made various pastimes", probably acrobatic stances which brought him seven guldens from the prince's pocket.[91] His daughter Elizabeth gave a gratuity to a cannon master who was responsible for fireworks in Luxembourg.[92]

Unfortunately, no precise description of dialogues or actions during these meetings is extant. Without question the prince(ss) was personally involved: nearly all of these small quantities of money or tips are marked as made *auf f(ürstlicher) D(urchlaucht) Beuelch* (according to an order of Princely Highness) or *von f(ürstlicher) D(urchlaucht)* (by Princely Highness), which means Maximilian or Elizabeth mandated the payments and thus these derived from their biddings.

There can be little doubt that they—definitely unconsciously—acted in line with Carafa's guidance. Although the commoners, performers, or mariners were arguably not the sort of acquaintances that *De institutione* urges to seek, the result is the same: money which Maximilian and Elizabeth distributed conferred on them an aura of magnanimity and generosity, a public image that every late-medieval or early modern royal figure strove to achieve and which is the primary objective of Carafa's treatise. As Felicity Heal puts it, visible acts of generosity were central to sixteenth-century kingship as it was a direct channel of mutual bond between subjects and ruler. This two-way dynamic was part of the larger organism because premodern society was, as Heal explains,

> an asymmetrical universe in which the realities of power move through systems of patronage and the bonds between men: and there are few more effective ways of expressing those realities than through the public articulation of generosity.[93]

Perhaps an even more frequent type of assignment in the two financial logs than tips in cash are material gifts. As Suzanne Butters brilliantly showed, both means of giving, precious objects and cash, were not just performative gestures of respect but created a strong sense of obligation. That is why prominent figures were anxious to safeguard their "gifty" public image—not only in maintaining their generosity but also in monitoring how others might interpret the received gifts. When, for example, the Florentines wanted to send a present to Wolfgang Rumpf von Wullross, a powerful personage at the court of Emperor Rudolf II, as a token of gratitude for Rumpf's support in diplomatic matters between the emperor and Tuscany, it was met with objections: having heard about the incoming gifts, Rumpf, concerned about the public backlash, valiantly protested but eventually gave in, as the Florentines started to propagate the story that these offerings were made on the occasion of his wedding. Since a similar pattern is documented for another Austrian nobleman too, nuptials were probably deemed a legitimate excuse to win somebody's favour or corrupt him.[94]

This does not come as a surprise, since, as the already quoted passage from Natalie Zemon Davis's book asserts, gifts were an integral part of the princely marriage ceremony.[95] Aside from the exchange of goods in the form of dowry and other dotal offerings that were inherent to matrimony, there were other types of donations from either of the wedding parties or third parties that directly translated into the social status of the newlyweds and both dynasties concerned. The gifts from the groom to the bride (or vice-versa) might have been a way to establish harmony between the spouses, disrupted not only by a wife's dowry but also by social inequalities. Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, who examined non-dotal marriage gifts in fifteenth-century Italy, argues that grooms ranking lower than their brides tended to attribute more precious

gifts as a way of compensating for this social imbalance.[96] Furthermore, gifts circulating over the course of the nuptials were tied to the projecting of social prestige and magnificence to the outer world, in Susan Mosher Stuard's words, they drew the event and its participants into the spotlight.[97] Jitse Jasperse showed how the precious items, collected in the trousseaus and displayed at the final entries, were an ultimate method of communing power and influence.[98]

Bearing all of these perspectives in mind, one can better evaluate the presents recorded in Maximilian II and Elizabeth's financial accounts and gift-giving occasions from other bridal journeys. In Maximilian and his daughter's cases, the gifts seem to have played a similar role to cash, i.e. to remunerate individuals for a service provided, that is why even such precious items as golden chains or silver goblets were left as a tip. It is hard to define a criterion according to which some people were presented with cash or a gift; it appears that the valuable objects were assigned to more prominent individuals whereas the (relatively) petty cash was given to minor ones. In addition to the expression of gratitude and magnificence, these offerings can be read as feedback on the festivities and entertainments from the prince's side too: Maximilian personally ordered payments and gifts to the horse preparer and stable boys of Mantua who probably took care of the hunt organised for the prince in the adjacent area of Marmirolo.[99] Besozzi, the chronicler of Maximilian's journey, describes it as a little terrestrial paradise.[100]

Sometimes, the service might have been status-saving: a day following his arrival to Barcelona, the prince mandated to reimburse one mariner with fifteen guldens for a pair of trousers the said mariner had given to Maximilian on the galley.[101] It remains unclear why the Habsburg was in urgent need of trousers from a low-ranking sailor (had he been of high status, his name and title would have been preserved). It is possible he got wet or sick as we know that Maximilian did not take the sea voyage well: he recounts in letters to several recipients how he got fever from the stormy sea[102] and even a letter has come down to us describing how the prince spent a long time observing ships in Genoa (prior to the sea leg of the journey) and testing whether he would get dizzy or not.[103]

But there were occasions when the presents were not a reaction to the service or entertainment. Elizabeth distributed sums of cash that were explicit or implicit alms: in Sarre-Union and Douzy, she let dispense money to the poor people in a local hospital. In Étalle, a low-class flower woman was given half a thaler, yet we do not know whether it was a remuneration for a bouquet given to the princess previously. A special kind of offering is baby gifts *(Kindschenken)*, small sums of cash, given to three low-class men who asked Elizabeth to be a godmother to their children.[104] Other princesses like Joanna of Castile [1496] and Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] also participated in baptism, so Elizabeth was not a solitary case in doing so.[105] Since godparenting was connected with strong social ties throughout the kid's later life, it was an exceptional way of

connecting with the local community.[106] Naturally, the passing-by princess could not be responsible for taking care of the children's material and spiritual well-being later on, but such an act could have left strong impression and brought social prestige to the parents of these children. Furthermore, for the princess, it could be another step in getting-into-role process as a mother of the realm.

As we have seen in Chapter 4, the hosting sovereign often provided the bridal traveller with various sorts of gifts, sometimes even in the form of provisions. Venice did so for every Habsburg bride(groom), although the city was not visited by either of them. This points to an intriguing fact—the benefactor did not have to be physically present during the gift-giving, which means that the nuptial travellers could interact with persons or institutional bodies remotely. There are strong hints that this was a rule rather than an exception: in July 1548, as Maximilian II made his way through northern Italy, Ercole II, duke of Ferrara, addressed a letter to Cristoforo Madruzzo, Cardinal of Trent and member of Maximilian's entourage. Ercole sends a pair of hunting dogs, the best and the most beautiful ones from his kennels, together with some provisions (salami, lettuce, candies), asking the cardinal to forward them to Maximilian.[107]

A similar pattern of distant gift-giving or bonding emerges for the travelling females as well. In a letter to Joanna of Habsburg [1565], Isabella Gonzaga, marchioness of Pescara, excuses herself for not being able to personally visit her and kiss her hands, so she sends a certain nobleman in her stead.[108] Even more personal is the letter of Suor Paola Gonzaga[109] to the same princess.[110] This nun from the Corpus Christi monastery in Mantua thanks Joanna for *amorevolezza et gentilezza* which the princess showed to her, probably during Joanna's visit to the monastery.[111] Paola then begs of her to have *memoria di me* and as a token of her affection, she sends her some flowers. The passage of the bridal traveller was thus clearly seen as an opportunity to create or retain links by means of gifts. In like manner to the corruption attempts elucidated by Suzanne Butters, the bridal journey, too, was a legitimate cause to exhibit one's largesse to the princely figure, and in so doing, to induce a sense of obligation in her/him, deeply rooted in the nature of the gift.

The presents circulated in the course of the bridal journeys could have been a way not only to connect with new people, either absent or present, but also with the old ones. Having received the rich Venetian offering in Dolcè, Joanna of Habsburg [1565]—unlike her brother Maximilian II—decided to send the Malvasia wine and sweet treats to her unmarried sisters Margaret, Magdalene, and Helena in Innsbruck. The Florentine envoy, describing this scene, adds that he would personally ensure that nothing would be dispatched to Innsbruck while they were still in Venetian territory, as this act would probably offend the hosts.[112] Since the report about the redistribution of the gifts came down to us only because of the envoy's misgivings, it is possible that this was

a common practice and that material objects flowed in many directions, but every time with the intention to create or strengthen the connections between individuals. Bridal journeys therefore had an irreplaceable place in this system as they endowed these persons with a reason to interact, and thus they were a unique forum for making contacts that would extend far beyond the time of the journey. Evaluating the frequency and character of these relationships definitely requires further research from a long-term perspective, but there are already known examples. On her way to Flanders, Isabel of Portugal [1429] stopped in London to meet her English relatives and attend the eighth birthday of King Henry VI. During this stay, she established a strong bond with her uncle, Cardinal Henry de Beaufort. Later on, this acquaintance made her the most qualified agent to negotiate political and commercial relations between Burgundian and English court.[113]

Paraphrasing Theresa Earenfight's words, the bridal journeys were definitely "queenly time".[114] They were one of the moments that created an ideal opportunity for the princesses to wield power, agency, and influence. If we understand agency as the ability to shape one's own destiny,[115] travelling brides definitely used their transfers to prepare for their upcoming role, in lines of Carafa's treatise. They made a positive first impression on the new courtiers; they employed obsequious correspondence to win their spouses over, and if necessary, they were ready to intervene in court management. The princesses were aware of the linguistic issue and some of them made first steps in the effort to learn the language. But there were also other options, not envisioned by Carafa, of how the princess might have gotten into the role, such as intercession or remembrance. Princess's power and agency were also oriented outwards—her decision could have had an impact on the journey's progress and she could use material offerings to connect with the people she encountered. This network of relationships was not the only thing that remained from the transfer—even more enduring was the panegyrical rendition of the journey, serving the purposefully created dynastic memory, which will be addressed in the next chapter.

Notes

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7

'NOW, THE DAY HAS COME, ABOUT WHICH I HAVE LEARNED FROM HISTORIES.' MEMORY AND PRAISE

After discussing the material, festive, instructive, and social dimensions of the journeys, there is one aspect left to tackle. What was the aftermath of these extraordinary events like? Did they have a role in creating the dynastic memory? And if so, in what way? The aim of this chapter is to investigate primarily the literary memorials; however, they were not the only form of memory. Apart from many visual representations, displayed throughout the book, one can find three-dimensional traces of the wedding journey. One such object, surviving until today is a stone column, located on Viale Vittorio Emanuele II in Siena (Figures 7.1 and 7.2), which celebrates the place of the first meeting of Eleanor of Portugal and Frederick III [1452]. A human-sized pillar is topped with a composite-style capital upon which a commemorative tablet is rested. On a front side, the tablet displays a high relief of the imperial and Portuguese crests (Figure 7.1), whereas on the rear (Figure 7.2) one can read an inscription about the auspicious *(laetis auspiciis)* encounter of the imperial spouses, although giving a wrong date (1451 instead of 1452). While Piccolomini attributes the raising of the column to his fellow countrymen from Siena, the Portuguese chronicler Ruy de Pina claims that it was built by a certain doctor João Fernandez de Silveira, the Portuguese ambassador who negotiated the marital union.[1] Its construction date is not known but it must have been erected in the years or decades after the wedding. In 1497, a German pilgrim to Rome lists it as a monument, worthy of interest.[2] Furthermore, the fresco from the turn of the sixteenth century depicting the joyous event from the Libreria Piccolomini in the Sienese cathedral by Pinturicchio positions the monument in the very centre. (Figure 5.1) It is possible that this Sienese column is not the only of its kind—Galeazzo Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan, was planning to erect a similar

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FIGURE 7.1 Siena column, front. Photo by Mongolo1984, CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons.

monument on the place of the first meeting with his wife Bona of Savoy in 1468 but jurisdiction-related quarrels most probably hindered the construction.[3]

There is a non-material memory too—a cult revolving around Santa Orosia in the town of Jaca located in the Pyrenees. According to many later legends, this princess, living in the seventh or eighth century should have been the daughter of the King of Bohemia. When crossing the Pyrenees to marry a Visigothic prince, she is captured by the Saracens and their leader falls in love with her. Resistant to his sexual desires and calls to convert to Islam, Orosia is tortured and put to death. Given the ahistoricity and fluidity of historical events, described in the story, nothing certain can be established about this princess. Still, in the Baroque period, the sites associated with her journey and martyrdom became centres of religious worship. Her remains are still venerated in the town of Jaca and her shrine is a stop on one of the routes of St. James's Way to Compostella. In Spanish national imagination, sixteenth-century dramatists associated Orosia with the last Visigoth king Roderic, linking her into the story of the fall of Spain to the Muslims. Together with another woman, Florinda la Cava, her defiled and dismembered body represents the nation's breakdown.[4]

Let us go back to the focus of this chapter, the literary memorials. There are many types of them but here, the focus is placed on two: the newly emerged genre of wedding orations and poems, the so-called epithalamia and the epic compositions sponsored by Emperor Maximilian I. Both of them entertained

FIGURE 7.2 Sienna column, rear. Photo by Mongolo1984, CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons.

two—at first sight contradictory—images of the transfer. One of them is triumphalism, apparent in its festival staging, another is travel peril and uncertainty that is offset by meticulous preparation and the acts of piety. Elaborating on these motifs, they imprinted on the journey an image of a heroic odyssey and thus bestowed upon it a powerful propagandistic (to contemporary as well as the future audience) and self-affirmative (for the dynastic identity) effect. As we have seen, a certain degree of panegyrical hyperbolism and epithalamic motives are present also in other narrative or even epistolary sources. However, these literary compositions do so unequivocally, blatantly, and with the clear agenda that often contrasts with the version of events depicted by the other types of evidence. This chapter thus demonstrates that spousal journeys were a powerful tool for subsequent memorialisation and panegyric.

What were epithalamia? As already said in Introduction, this comprehensive term denotes various wedding poems and orations that share recurrent topics of the genre, such as invocation of gods, praise of ancestry, the extolling of newlyweds, and exhorting them to love each other and to bear offspring.[5] Surprisingly, however, scholars have not paid the same amount of attention to each form (poetic-lyric and in-prose) of epithalamium. Whereas D'Elia's book constitutes the only work which examines Renaissance epithalamia in prose on a large comparative scale,[6] their poetic counterparts have been widely studied. To name only the most recent works, Matthew Tibble, for instance, looks into wedding poems written for the union of Mary of Tudor and Philip II

of Spain, and by juxtaposing literary motifs in these compositions, he exposes different perspectives on Queen Mary I regarding her power status and gender.[7] Christof Ginzel, on the other hand, examined wedding poetry composed for the Palatine wedding of 1613 as an architectural monument, constructed by poetic bricks and mortar, that was to convey a sense of stability and endurance in times of crisis.[8] Marion Rutz analysed the interconnections between politics, diplomacy, and literature in four epithalamia from the 1512 wedding of King Sigismund I of Poland and Barbara Zápolya.[9] Although these and many other works successfully exposed epithalamia in their wider perspective, not confined to literary analysis but pointing to their dynastic or political use, a broader, trans-European analysis of Neo-Latin genre of epithalamia, in both of its forms, is much needed.

As already discussed in Introduction, epithalamia were closely tied to the traditions of ancient-style wedding rites, in which the procession played a dominant role, and thus they could operate within the context of the bridal transfer. However, analysis of the traveling theme in Renaissance wedding poetry definitely deserves more attention. One example is a study by Antonio Cueto, which distinguishes a tripartite scheme, named after the Roman procession *deductio*. As Cueto shows, this poetic structure presents the passage of the bride through a traumatic departure from the family (1), an arduous journey (2), and happiness of meeting the groom (3). The first phase features stereotypes of grieving, begging the parents to grant the bride a permit to leave them, and the whole scene is reinforced by gestures of embrace and tears. These acts—but in a more joyous atmosphere—are then repeated at the first encounter with the husband, who is portrayed to be ardent with desire to see and to join with his spouse. The central part, the procession, is executed under the auspices of the gods from classical mythology. The reception of the bride is connected with exhortations to enter the groom's house and his bed, with assurances that the initial fear and bashfulness will turn into marital joy.[10]

An almost flawless rendition of this scheme is evident in the poetic works connected to the wedding transfer of Bona Sforza [1518]. The epithalamia, propemptica (farewell poems), and the in-verse travelogue written on the occasion of this journey constructed a gradual passage from sorrow to joy. The authors of these literary pieces skilfully remodelled the arduous journey, taking place between the late winter and the early spring season, and exaggerated the harshness of the weather during the first leg of the journey while stressing positive aerial conditions in the latter parts of it. The emotions of the main protagonist are externalised to the entirety of nature: thus, for example, when Bona Sforza bids farewell to her mother in Italy, everybody cries: nature, Neptune as the god of the sea, and Eurus, the god of the eastern wind. Conversely, as Bona approaches her husband, the sun starts to shine and every place the princess passes begins to resemble *locus amoenus*, the motif of the pleasant place. The aim of this rhetorical strategy was to posit the princess as a heroine who overcame

the dangers of travel, while at the same time to cast her husband, the king, as a long-awaited object of desire.[11]

Another form of literary rendition presents itself within the corpus of texts sponsored and partially authored by Maximilian I. The theme of spousal travel is reflected in two of these texts: his own ride to Burgundy serves as a background to the heroic poem *Theuerdank*, whereas in the emperor's autobiography, *Weißkunig* is inserted a translated (into German vernacular) and slightly edited account of Eleanor of Portugal's [1451/1452]—Maximilian's mother— journey by Nicolas Lanckman. The extensive literary programme that Maximilian sponsored and in which he often probably stepped in as an author was completely governed by the aim of building the *Gedechtnus* (memory). This memory should have been institutionalised and entrusted to scholars, and unlike old monastic annals it was supposed to be accessible to everybody. How did these two ways of rendition, the Humanistic (epithalamic) and "maximilianist", differ and what did they have in common?

This chapter looks at the two ways the epithalamic poems and orations could render the portrayal of bridal transfer, namely triumphalism and crisis. In an analysis of the epithalamia, Cueto's tripartite scheme is applied. As we will see, the themes inherent to this literary model were also employed in other literary compositions and types of sources too. Images of pain and distress used in the Renaissance wedding poetry were heavily exploited to serve encomiastic goals also in Maximilian I's *Weißkunig* and the *Theuerdank*, which are addressed later. All in all, the wedding journeys are memorialised by various literary genres, which refashioned them as jubilant or Herculean venture. The ultimate aim was to extol the dynasty, either by adding up to the splendour of the nuptial festival or creating the dynastic self-affirmation, that is, dynastic memory. Especially in the *Theuerdank*, the goal was not to preserve memory of one event but the entire life of the emperor, therefore using the framework of the wedding transfer as a *lieu de mémoire*. Even though full of recurrent motifs and clichés, these literary compositions—together with the festival books, conserving the ceremonial splendour in a slightly different way—were crucial for shaping the original and distinct character of the House of Habsburg in both the present and for posterity.

Triumph and joy

Petrus Roysius, the author of the wedding poem for the union of Sigismund II Augustus of Poland and Catherine of Habsburg [1553], describes the princess's transition in this way:

> Beautiful Catherine already left her fatherly house and after a long farewell she abandoned those fertile lands of yours, joyful Vienna, and she is closer now to the country of Lech, arriving at the borders of her husband, the king.[12]

After the welcome embassy, sent by the king to Olomouc, urging Catherine to speed up, the princess is coming to the borders:

> When, with a joyful step, the bride touched Lech's borders and august [or Augustus's] kingdoms, a virtuous group of matrons, together with beautiful girls, came to meet her. […]
> These [women] received the incoming bride on the first threshold of the kingdom, wishing her favourable marriage, exhorting her to step into [the realm] with her right foot….[13]

When Catherine approached Cracow ("walls of Gracchus", legendary founder of the city), King Sigismund Augustus rode off to the field outside of the town of Balice to wait for her:

> As the king saw the arriving [princess], walking on the fields with a joyful step, he watched her with a steady gaze from the distance, and at once his entire heart burst into flames seeing the bride's rosy cheeks.[14]

The final entry into the city of Cracow is an explosion of jubilation:

> When the bishop finished his speech, the following roar of the present folk reached the heavens, hills echoed the shouting and the joyful roar of the people who occupied many fields far and wide, yearning to see the mentioned bride and the new queen. […]
> Many thousands of people [are there], glittering in gems and gold […]
> You would say that all the treasure of the world was heaped here….[15]

This portrayal is by no means unique, as the same author, Petrus Roysius, renders the first meeting of Catherine's elder sister Elizabeth [1543] with the same king:

> Now, even though the king's heart is wholly agitated, seeing the queen's [=Elizabeth's] face and rosy cheeks, and eyes shining like the sun's rays….[16]

These and other examples of epithalamia poems employ a whole set of motifs and literary techniques. The prominent themes were restlessness, gradation, and most importantly, the *deductio* scheme.[17] The most common theme from the *deductio* is the traumatic and often dramatised departure. Roysius presents the farewell scene of Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543] to her mother, Anne of Bohemia:

> The dear mother mourns the departure of the daughter for long, she holds her in embrace, saying: "My child, goodbye, goodbye!"
> "Go!"—Having said that, her eyes became sodden with tears, testifying to the gentle pain of the mother.
> "Go!"—she says—"Unite yourself with the honourable Polish king."[18]

Christophorus Cernota, author of the poem from the same wedding, describes the scene more succinctly; however, he also hints at the protracted and emotion-laden valediction:

> Again, the parents held their daughter in embrace, and long were saying "Goodbye," and [the same did] the brothers and sisters.[19]

The farewell is portrayed as an intimate act between grief-stricken parents and a daughter who possesses a higher duty that rationalises this unnatural rupture from the native family. The common gesture of embrace expresses the kinship bond that is about to be broken as the new union, with the husband and his family, will be forged:

> The sky was purple, surrounded by gold, when the spouses pleasantly clasped hands.[20]

Although the farewells are permeated with a sense of tragedy, the course of the journey communicates splendour and magnanimity, manifested by the immensity of the princess's entourage and their attire and accoutrements. The toil of travel might take some toll on the princess's body ("the queen is tired from the long journey"),[21] but the overall atmosphere is filled with joy and pomp. The final happiness is foreshadowed by the motif of restlessness that exhorts the bride to speed up to reach her groom, or, on the other hand, by the portrayal of the husband as anxious or impatient. In Roysius's words

> [… the king] cannot suffer any more delay. He blames the sky, rotating so lazily on its axis, he blames the roads and vastness of the fields […].[22]

In this poem, Sigismund Augustus is even said to be tempted to break with tradition:

> Three times, [the king] wanted to cancel custom and well-known practice to give a loose rein to his horse and ride to Balice, three times the council, three times reason stopped him to not break with ancient custom and ceremony.[23]

Other poets use an inverse structure and rather than dissuading the groom and reining his passions, they encourage him to take action:

> Spur fast horses, Augustus, the bride of yours, daughter of the king of Romans, is approaching. Ride to meet her! This is how the girl should be received….[24]

The husband's anxiety is one of the motifs of the *deductio* scheme and was supposed to counteract the feelings of unease and tension of the bride leaving

her domestic threshold.[25] To counter the groom's emotional state, the bride is constantly urged to hurry up, while also given assurances that not the future spouse but the entire kingdom is impatiently awaiting her arrival.[26]

Interestingly, this positioning changes in the poem by Pietro Bargeo, composed for the nuptials of Joanna of Habsburg and Francesco de' Medici [1565]. The epithalamium reflects the fact Francesco visited his soon-to-be wife just a couple weeks before she sets out,[27] and transforms the groom's zeal into the quest of reaching his beloved one:

> Hit the road! Do not sluggishly prolong your joy! Every labour should be felt light by those who are in love.[28]

This time, it is the groom who is exhorted to reach the bride as soon as possible. In doing so he is affronted with many perils, confronted with aggravated weather conditions or arduous geographical terrain:

> The icy winter cannot delay him in traveling, no rains, no heavy snow, no rivers, widened by many streams [either] […]
> He cannot end his labours until he happily sees the face of his wife.[29]

Joanna's departure is then put in a jubilant mode, omitting any dangers that the perilous track might pose to her:

> The joyful virgin left the paternal gods and stepped into the bed of the beloved husband […].[30]

Thus, although Bargeo's work does not employ the *deductio* in its common form, it still oscillates between the themes of triumph and labour, while also using the traditional figure of restlessness. In other poems—when the spouses did not meet beforehand—the first meeting is presented as a culmination of their mutual desires and although in real life the orations were delivered by delegates, in the poetic rendition it is often the groom who addresses the wife:

> [The king] said: "Oh, the dear light, restored to my eyes, at last, I was allowed to receive you! At last, I could see you, my sweet bride, my only delight, the only hope of our kingdom, of our salvation. Proceed to the kingdom! Learn to call it yours…".[31]

As we have seen in Chapter 4, the welcome speeches worked with similar tropes (exhortations to enter the new realm, identifying the princess's arrival with the fulfilment of common hopes—to bear a prodigy and thus to certify dynastic continuity), so this portrayal from Roysius's poem might have been inspired by an actual oration. By reattributing these words to the groom, however,

the dynamics between the newlyweds is shifted onto a more personal, almost romantic level—mirroring the relationship with parents during the farewell—and thus it humanises the matrimony, concluded by political motivations, and presents it as a great love story. This inherent encomiastic technique is accompanied by explicit praises of the groom and the bride (beauty, prodigy, virtues, etc.) or more implicit ones, for instance when the princess asks to defer the sexual act of consummation until the next day because "in her heart, she carries the great and omnipotent lord of Olympus",[32] meaning the Eucharist. This postponement of the marital joy (and purpose of the matrimony), contradicting the spirit of epithalamic tradition, is deemed licit as it lays bare the princess's piety. God's protection and will, sanctioning the union, is as omnipresent in the poems as God himself, yet as we have just seen, not clothed in traditional Christian terms but rendered in classical terms, sometimes corresponding to one Greek or Roman deity (Jupiter), sometimes to many of them. The divine powers protect the princess on her way (e.g. Apollo sending a special carriage) and pledge to support her during maternity (Juno promising to help with breastfeeding).[33] Gods, nymphs, Graces, and classical heroes contribute also to the overall splendour of the meeting of the spouses and wedding festivities.

Such a triumphal interpretation of the journey had its counterparts in the prose epithalamia as well. Giasone dal Mayno, a Milanese orator, made a speech on the wedding of Bianca Maria Sforza and Maximilian I in 1494. In it, he addresses the groom:

> It is hardly credible and it must be attributed to the divine will… […] The queen [Bianca Maria Sforza] made a long journey to Your Majesty in the midst of winter […] No rain, no snow fell from the sky. No cold, no ice, tightened in rigid stiffness, stood in her way. On the contrary, many roads were covered with summer-like dust. Sunny rays of divine splendour brought delight and everyday shone on the mountains and fields, and produced heat beyond the standards of winter time. The Alps of Rhetia, neighbouring the sky, which divide Germany and Italy, savage and inhospitable, calmed down during the imperial transit as if they were trying to lower themselves.[34]

This version of events, however, is in direct contradiction with Bianca Maria Sforza's letters to her sister Anna, duchess of Ferrara. In them, she paints a totally different picture of the journey which was far more problematic. As the princess made a crossing of an alpine mountain pass,

> the coldest wind blew right to my heart, the snow was high, covered with ice and powdered like flour. Pathways were narrow with many places where one could easily fall into an abyss. […] Laments here, curses there.[35]

In another letter, the princess describes how "the wind was so cold and terrible that I thought that somebody had just blown a trumpet into my ears".[36]

Although Bianca does not explicitly mention any storm or blizzard and she speaks about "nice and very tempestuous (?) air", the voyage was clearly not as ideal as dal Mayno's speech would like us to believe. In many places, she describes poor accommodation and inferior food,[37] or, in one instance, a fire that broke out in one of the lodgings and killed twenty-four horses. Reportedly the princess observed the affliction of the animals with her own eyes:

> I saw how it [=the horse] was shaking as if it had been bitten by a tarantula. Its tail and eyes were burned, and it was paralysed, though still alive. God Almighty, save us from such dangers.[38]

How can one account for such a conflicting depiction of one journey? Should dal Mayno's rendition be dismissed as a typical example of rhetorical falsification? It can be argued that the rejection of the Milanese orator's picture would cause the misunderstanding of his overarching goal: he strove to shape the journey and the wedding union as a consequence of divine will, materialised in a smooth, sun-drenched transition during which no one suffered or died. Moreover, he tried to present Bianca Maria as the new lady of the territory, saying that nature already accepted her by lowering or bending itself to her: "Because it was appropriate that every piece of this land would yield to its lady."[39]

The leniency of the natural elements thus represents the acceptance of the princess, in other words, nature pays homage to its new mistress by taming its savage traits. In doing so, dal Mayno—as well as the authors of the epithalamic poems—aimed to extol the princess and the dynasties uniting in marital union, as this was the main objective of the Renaissance wedding speeches. However, the praise was not a purpose in itself but was intended to exalt the prestige of the royal/imperial pair, that in the premodern world equated directly to social standing and power. On the other hand, Bianca Maria's account could also have been exaggerated, with her seeking to present herself as a heroine in the eyes of her younger sister, perhaps, in order to gain her sympathies. The princess is documented as having used this epistolary strategy, articulated by the strong employment of emotions, also in correspondence with other family members, with the goal of expressing a mutual bond or to intervene in political matters.[40]

Toil and hardship

As already seen in the wedding poem by Pietro Bargeo, describing Francesco de' Medici's trip to his future wife, there was another strategy for memorialising the bridal voyages, that is focusing on travel hardships. This technique is quite visible in Maximilian I's autobiography *Weißkunig*, namely in the

portrayal of the bridal transfer of the emperor's mother, Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452]. The *Weißkunig* takes over whole passages from Lanckman's chronicle of the journey, and aside from translating them into the German vernacular (Lanckman's travelogue was written in Latin), it highlights the colourful parts while sometimes omitting the parts that were probably inconvenient for the memory and self-presentation of the dynasty. For instance, the most embarrassing part, the mediocre reception embassy, consisting of two priests and a handful of their servants who got robbed on the way, is only hinted at in the *Weißkunig*. So, whereas Lanckman gives an in-detail account of how the delegation ran into bandits who took away all the precious possession the imperial envoys were carrying, the *Weißkunig* briefly states that "in the land of Astorga, following the city of León, the embassy suffered great trouble from robbers".[41] Similarly, a humiliating crossing of the Portuguese borders and the initial imprisonment of the envoys, portrayed vividly by Lanckman, is omitted and instead the delegation is said to be accepted with many honours *(mit grosser erung)*.[42]

Erwin Koller spotted several other discrepancies between the two texts and he pointed out how, in several instances, the *Weißkunig* tries to cast the events in a more positive light for the House of Habsburg,[43] but a more in-depth comparison of these two writings would be needed. The scope of this book does not allow for such an analysis, but in essence, we can say that the compilers of the *Weißkunig* did not deem the travel hardships the Portuguese princess had to suffer en route, as inappropriate. Quite contrarily: storms, the scattering of ships, fights with pirates, and other troubles are shown to their full extent. Unlike the afflictions that befell the reception delegation, these were not left out from the narrative. The robbery experienced by the imperial envoys to Portugal stemmed from the mediocre character of the delegation as such—if it had consisted of a proper military escort, as was usual in other bridal journeys, it would have never been subjected to this ordeal. Hence, incorporation of this accident into the *Weißkunig* might have made a reader ask how such a thing could happen and inevitably, the frugality of Emperor Frederick III, Eleanor's husband, and Maximilian's father, would be exposed.

On the other hand, stressing the princess's tribulations could have been a very efficient tool to present her as a heroine. Focusing on the travel dangers in relation to the bridal-journey discourse was important for two reasons. First, as Shayne Aaron Legassie pointed out, medieval travel writing often used the hardships of travel as a very effective way to gain prestige and value in the eyes and ears of their listeners and readers because travelling as an activity was always deemed suspicious. Therefore,

> [t]ravelers and travel writers alike sought to preempt objections to their untertakings by appealing to the inherent dignity of travail. […] the inevitable hazards of travel endowed it with a heroic aura.[44]

Having endured some form of labour would justify the travel and put it in a positive light. Although the wedding transfer could have been deemed a justifiable type of travel, as they were prompted by necessity rather than by a personal incentive, the narrative focusing on toil and travails clearly had the potential to re-stylise the journey as an epic odyssey.

Second, and despite what has just been said, bridal journeys could have been deemed as even more suspicious activity than regular travel because they combined the traditionally mistrustful pursuit (that is travelling) with the female gender that was considered more prone to sin and misconduct. Travelling or movement in general was in clear contradiction with stability and domesticity, viewed as attributes of the virtuous woman. Furthermore, it was believed that the journey was automatically connected with many threats to a woman's chastity, being a direct channel to expose her to many sinful encounters, especially during the nuptial travel when brides lacked the father or husband's authority. To counter this mistrust, as Patricia Akhimie writes,

> [travel a]ccounts combat the stigma by first of all being subsumed by other narratives [of family, religion, and state], legitimating travel by linking it with domestic and with familial duties (wifely, motherly), and thus with the ideological imperatives (service to the state, religious devotion).[45]

This was certainly the case with the bridal journeys that were motivated by political decisions and/or dynastic goals, however, as Akhimie later states, a dramatic course of the voyage helped to provide an almost saintly image for the woman on the way.[46] Furthermore, by the same token, as Diana Pelaz Flores comments, difficulties that the princesses or queens experienced on the way do not reveal their emotions of panic or fear, but quite contrarily, their steadfastness and constancy of character.[47] Therefore, one can surely conclude that this combination of travel and travail was also on the minds of the Humanistic poets and court chroniclers, striving to memorialise and extol the event in the epithalamia, the *Weißkunig* but after all, also in Lanckman's account of Eleanor of Portugal's [1451/1452] journey.

This image of the princely bride as a literally safe haven in the stormy sea is repeatedly used not only by other panegyrical works but by festival books as well. In his *Couronne margaritique*, an allegorical work praising Margaret of Habsburg's virtues, Jean Lemaire retells an anecdote from her wedding journey to Spain [1497]. After one horrible and tempestuous night on the sea, the princess and her ladies were sharing their fears and anxieties. Being so close to death, they proposed that each should make up her own epitaph. Margaret allegedly briskly composed hers:

> Here lies Margaret, a gentle woman, who had two husbands while still a maiden.[48]

"The two husbands" refers to John, Infante of Asturias, to whom Margaret was travelling in 1497 and King Charles VIII of France, to whom she was betrothed in childhood but the alliance was called off. For Lemaire, the mock epitaph was a clear token of the princess's "true urbanity, proper gentility and noble facetiousness", in the Renaissance tradition of the witty king *(rex facetus)*. But the nonchalance with which Margaret treats the life danger points to the ideal image of the queen who happens to be in this predicament. The trope of steadfast princess is also to be found in other sources, such as the festival book portraying Maria of Guimarães's journey to Flanders [1565]. When a fire broke out aboard the princess's ship, "with unconquered spirit, she went to see the horrible fire with her own eyes. Without any sign of fright, she consoled the people to behave bravely and act swiftly and diligently".[49] This is immediately linked to the princess's character which stands out from her gender as the account goes on saying that "this a truly a bold thing and [she] is a magnanimous woman because there was no great or minor lady who was not trembling with fear".[50] The veracity of the account is further based on two witnesses who were standing by the princess's side during the entire event. A very similar image is extant in a panegyrical book in honour of the deceased Queen Margaret of Habsburg by Giovanni Altoviti. In a booklet, richly provided with engravings, there is also the scene of the princess's turbulent sea voyage (Figure 7.3). The terror of

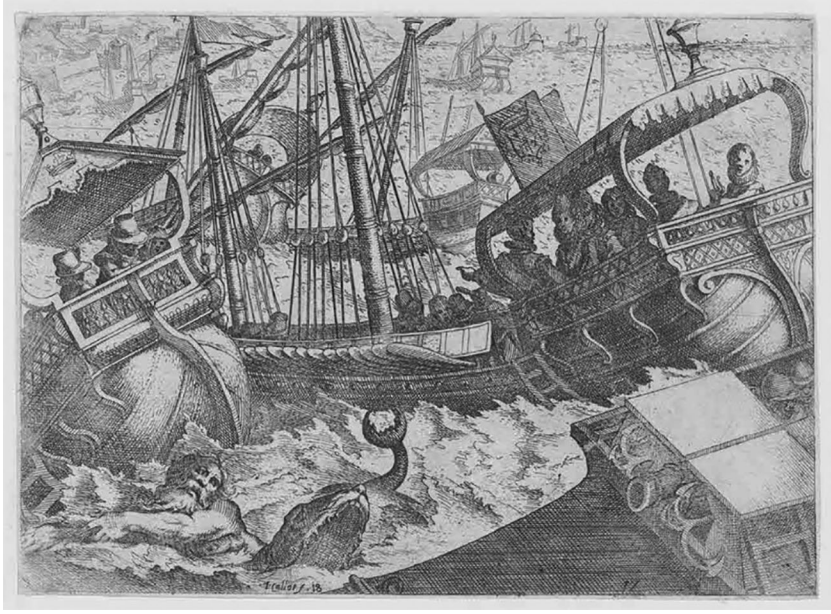

FIGURE 7.3 Antonio Tempesta, Margaret of Habsburg during the seastorm, etching, 1612. Giovanni Altoviti, *Essequie... di Margherita d'Austria*. Albertina, Vienna, volume no. and page It/III/8/8.

storm, visible in the scrummage of warped ships and waves, makes Margaret hardly noticeable. It is only the accompanying Latin text that brings the princess into the limelight:

> [She had] the queenly virtue, which the prosperous things did not corrupt, and the adverse things are testing. When she is crossing the sea to Barcelona, a violent storm breaks. She is not terrified by it but with royal magnanimity, she supports and reassure others, who are stupefied wit horror.[51]

The voyage of Anne of Habsburg [1570] confirms how it was important for the authors of the official accounts of the ceremonies, be it festival books and panegyrical compositions, to portray the firm character of the princess. The festival book by Juan Lopéz de Hoyos which describes the order of festivities and ceremonies of the queen's arrival to Madrid, also briefly touches about her naval transfer from Flanders to Spain. Generally, it is portrayed as a very tranquil and prosperous cruise:

> Then, a fortunate wind came and Our Lord [God] made big favours to those realms by illuminating them with the presence and successful arrival of the queen, our lady [Anne] who landed at the port of Santander […].[52]

Another source, not a festival book but a travelogue by a certain Alixes de Cotereau about the flotilla's cruise to and back from Spain, describes the same journey quite differently. One can say that it is an account of calamities: on one ship, a lantern caused fire, which took great effort to douse. Another day, the wind was so strong that the ship started to wobble so strongly that horses, stationed on the low deck, broke through the benches and bars.[53] But the princess's life was in imminent danger too:

> […] our ship almost collided with the admiral's ship, where the queen was too. This happened out of the fault of one young mariner who held the helm of our ship. Due to the strength of the sea waves, the helm slipped from his hands. This filled our queen with great fear and panic because at the moment, she was standing on the upper deck of the ship. To save herself, she wanted to jump to the lifeboat, making the sign of the cross three or four times.[54]

Such a portrayal of the anxious and agitated princess did not fit into the narrative aiming to underline the firmness of her character, so the Lopéz de Hoyos's aforesaid festival book leaves it out entirely. One can argue that de Hoyos did so

out of ignorance and lack of information about the naval leg of Anne's journey. But this is not the case: he gives details about an English admiral and ten ships, sent by Queen Elizabeth I, that accompanied Anne's flotilla in their waters, paid reverence to her and brought her a gift of diamond *de gran valor*. When leaving, Anne presented the English admiral and captains *muchas preseas y cadenas de oro* ("many jewels and chains of gold").[55] De Cotereau provides the same report, adding just a few unimportant details.[56] If these facts were known to de Hoyos, the news about the journey calamities reached him too. For the sake of credibility, he did not choose to portray the princess as heroine either and rather opted to render the journey as a triumphal passage only, just as dal Mayno did for Bianca Maria Sforza [1493].[57]

Nevertheless, both approaches—whether the authors and poets chose to exaggerate the severity of the travel ordeals or rather opted for presenting an auspicious passage, rhyming with the triumphalism of the nuptials—took advantage of these problems and used them as material for praising the wedding, dynasties, or particular princesses. However, we can see a quite different approach at the end of the sixteenth century. As Louise Nyholm Kallestrup has shown, the tumultuous journey of Anne of Denmark to Scotland [1589] resulted in witchcraft trials. In Copenhagen, several women were accused and convicted of having caused the storm that made Anne's flotilla take provisional shelter in Norway.[58] The accusations of sorcery levelled against the earl of Bothwell in Scotland were also based on his position as admiral of the royal fleet at the time of the journey.[59] This approach attempts to find a culprit for the meteorological and other types of misfortune rather than trying to exploit their potential for rhetoric and dynastic memory. Ultimately, however, it attests to the fact that bridal journeys and princely weddings were not performed in an immutable unitary style but that they reflected the wider social atmosphere.

The exploitation of travel dangers is, however, not confined to the literary presentation of female wedding transfers. Pitfalls and dangers lurking on the nuptial track provide a framework for the heroic journey of the knight Theuerdank in the namesake epic poem, commissioned and probably also authored by Maximilian I.[60] After the death of her father, Princess Ehrenreich begs Theuerdank to come to her, as they had been previously promised to marry each other and that was her late father's wish:

> [The messenger] said "The gracious lord, be sure: I was sent here to You by my lady, called Ehrenreich, a mighty and rich queen, unequalled in honour. And she commanded me with words to find You as soon as possible, to give to You her greetings. […] You should thus come with me to her, so she will have a man who dares to do, what is appropriate for a knight…".[61]

Theuerdank happily accepts the invitation but refused to come straight to the bride:

> [Theuerdank replies:] "Now, the day has come which I have desired so much, about which I have learned from chronicles and histories. So tell to your lady: I do not want to see until I will have done so many good deeds that she can marry me with honour."[62]

Thirsty for adventure, the knight sets out to reach his bride, but in the course of the journey, he must face and overcome traps and ambushes, laid by the three devil's captains, Fürwittig, Unfalo, and Neidelhart. Having successfully prevailed in every trial, Theuerdank marries Ehrenreich, however the consummation of the matrimony is postponed until the knight's return from the crusade, and thus the end of the story remains open.

As soon as the poetic opus, accompanied by more than a hundred woodcuts from prominent German artists, saw the light of day (ca. 1512), it was no secret that Theuerdank stood for Maximilian, Ehrenreich for Mary of Burgundy, and the whole storyline for Maximilian's passage to Flanders in 1477. The plot was, naturally, strongly romanticised, in the tradition of the medieval *chansons de geste* or *Heldenbücher* by court minstrels and troubadours. However, as Heinz Engels points out, the *Theuerdank* differs from this poetic tradition in two important aspects: firstly, the hero manages to triumph over every difficulty with some sort of moral gravitas, and secondly, the tale has the appearance of reality.[63] There are no giants, dragons, or other mythical creatures standing in Theuerdank's way, on the contrary, he is confronted with problems that might very well happen in the real world:

> Theuerdank did not expect anything bad from him [=Unfallo], without any concern he goes to hunt the *chamois* (mountain goats) […] The peasant [sent by Unfallo] acts according to his orders, and loosens one boulder which hurtles down towards the hero […] He [=Theuerdank] falls down to the ground. The rock is rolling above him, so it was necessary that he duck otherwise, his life would be brought to an end.[64]

This sense of realism is boosted by the attached *Clavis* ("the key"), authored by one of the poem's co-authors, Melchior Pfinzing, which specifies the exact place where a particular incident occurred to Maximilian and sometimes reinterprets the particular episode, imprinting an allegorical meaning on it.

Maximilian probably deemed his journey and subsequent nuptials to Mary of Burgundy as one of the most significant points of his life, as he addresses it in the *Weißkunig* too (though, unfortunately, not the journey itself) and he even planned to create a more light-hearted version of the *Theuerdank*, entitled *Freydal*. Unfortunately, the text of the *Freydal* was never

completed and only its outline and visual part (scenes of the tournaments the hero participated in) has come down to us. The *Theuerdank* thus remains Maximilian's main opus devoted thematically to his wedding journey. However, although the plot is framed by the actual wedding and voyage, the episodes—if they really happened at all—are inspired by the entire life of the emperor. The poem could well have been entitled, in Jan-Dirk Müller's words, *pericula et memorabilia facta*—dangerous and memorable deeds.[65] In a way, therefore, the literary rendition of Maximilian's journey served as a *lieu de mémoire* of his reign, transposing his lifetime into the quest for his (allegedly) beloved wife.

Yet the *Theuerdank* is not only a recreation of the wedding transfer in terms of heroic literature but was also meant to convey a didactical message in allegorical language. The three devil's captains, Fürwittig, Unfalo, and Neidelhart, ought to represent the three phases of human life and three temptations connected with them, as their names suggest: Fürwittig symbolises carelessness and voluptuousness of youth, Unfalo exemplifies dangers which a mature individual may run into while fulfilling his/her plans, and Neidelhart encapsulates hate and spite, amassed over years. Theuerdank, who is an everyman and God-chosen at the same time, must overcome snares and threats posed by these evil qualities not only in the outer world but also in his heart. The hero's quest is thus also a journey to his inner self, to self-understanding and self-observation.[66] In light of this, one might rightly ask to what extent the poem is even an autobiography and if it is not better, as Rabea Kohnen suggests, to understand it as a pure literary composition that was given some traits from actual events in order to boost its significance.[67]

There have been several suggestions as to how to read the *Theuerdank*. It can be understood as didactical and moral literature, a sort of continuation of the popular medieval genre of the mirror of princes. It can be viewed from the perspective of military developments and technology, or reevaluation of the attitudes towards nature or mountains.[68] As noted above, the epic is often considered as a condensation of Maximilian's entire life, visible either in the three evil captains, standing for three stages of life, or the particular episodes which the attached interpretative *Clavis* locates to an exact place or event. However, the *Theuerdank* can be read as a *lieu de mémoire* of the bridal journeys as a whole—in other words, it is an encapsulation of everything that might have happened during the bride(groom)'s passage. Each of the three evil captains, Fürwitting, Unfallo, and Neidelhart appears in the formal capacity of the prince's host. This, for example, entails the ceremonial role of riding out to greet guests:

> As they [Theuerdank and his herald] came to it [the mountain pass] they saw the captain Fürwittig coming towards them.
> He received them approapriately, and said: 'Be welcome!'[69]

But it encompasses also another part of the reception—the providing the guest with proper entertainment, such as hunting:

> Fürwittig said: 'I have heard the hearsay that You are a hunter. Your stay here should not be for you tiresome so let us ride one mile or two in the woods. There I will show you proudly a stag with nice horns […].[70]

Many incidents or trials that befall the main character are the results of the reception offered by the hosts on the way, in this case, the three evil captains. With this perspective in mind, we might better understand the hero's endless gullibility that leads him to fall for the villain's schemes over and over again—the idea that the host would do harm to the guest was beyond any comprehension. In addition, the three captains take advantage of the knight's different cultural backgrounds, which is another feature common to the foreign brides and grooms. Sometimes, the villains were able to lure him into the trap by stating that "our manner *(monier)* in the land is to hunt such beast across the country […]", or that it is "a custom *(syt)* in this country" to win glory in a seemingly dangerous way.[71] In staging the scene with dangers the hero is supposed to meet, the epic again uses one of the usual aspects of bridal travel. Facing the other and unknown, Theuerdank, like many premodern brides and grooms, is left at the mercy of his new environment. It takes time to discern the evil design and resist it.

The slow progress of the wedding traveller does not have the form of festive staging. Instead, it is swapped for good deeds the hero must show on the way. The knight Theuerdank and the travelling bride(groom) alike cannot proceed directly and swiftly to their destined spouse—unlike the envoy who finds the knight and brings back the news about him to Queen Ehrenreich, the main protagonist is denied the fastest and the most direct route. The journey to reach the spouse is not a simple transport; it must be a journey of higher agenda. It might seem obvious that this is where the real and literary worlds diverge—that Theuerdank's agenda is morality, while the main purpose of the bridal travellers is to visualise their dynasty's greatness through a spectacular set of festivities. But on a personal level, these two worlds are not separated at all. Achieving honour or proving himself in the eyes of his upcoming bride is behind Theuerdank's all actions. Throughout the text, the evil captains persuade the hero to undertake the dangerous enterprises because they will personally retell their lady of his skills and virtues.[72] This links us back to Carafa's advice of gaining the husband's favour during the journey. In both cases, the journey serves as a way to increase one's status in the eyes of a future spouse and thus to adjust the new stage in life.

But also the particular episodes look very similar to the ones that might have happened during the wedding transfers, although no journey entails all of them. Theuerdank eagerly explores interesting places or inventions the

captains show to him, such as a polishing mill (Chapter 21), cannons, artillery and firearms (Chapters 39, 50, and 60), or fortifications (Chapter 64). As we have seen above, Anne of Foix [1502] behaved very similarly in inspecting the Venetian Arsenal or Brescia's armoury, but fortunately for her, there was no Fürwittig or Unfallo lurking to exploit her curiosity into a virtue-proving task. Like travelling bride(grooms) the epic hero is also beset with adversities: he must deal with the snow and icy roads (Chapters 23, 29, and 68), fire accidents (Chapter 73), sickness (Chapters 67 and 70), storms (Chapters 32, 43, 46, 49, 52, 64, and 72), or thefts and robbery (Chapter 86). Six times (Chapters 32, 43, 46, 64, 65, and 72) Theuerdank even had to face perils of the sea voyage, although Maximilian's actual journey to Burgundy was (if we do not take into account a potential river transport) overland. Maximilian was quite familiar with the turbulent naval transfers of his mother Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452] or daughter Margaret [1497], so it must have seemed natural to him that a proper wedding journey had to involve sea as a place of ultimate life threat. Unlike his great-grandson Maximilian II [1548], who had to train his maritime abilities and still did not bear the cruise well, Maximilian's literary hero is a born seafarer. Without any instruction or previous knowledge, he knows how to pull the ship's rope and steer it into a safe spot.[73]

The maritime calamities also provide a space for the hero to demonstrate his steadfastness, as evident in scene 43 (Figure 7.4):

> All marines let drop their oars and beseeched God with all their heart […] In this distress, Theuerdank alone was quite intrepid and bold. He called onto the sailors to keep up their posts […].[74]

Like Eleanor of Portugal [1451/1452], Margaret of Habsburg [1497], or Maria of Guimarães [1565] the knight is portrayed to be the only person aboard who keeps his nerve and comforts others. In overcoming other dangers, he—like the bridal travellers—seeks divine protection as he "diligently said his prayer / everyday with intensity, / he praised God, Virgin Mary / so God saved / his life from all ploy / and fraud on this earth".[75]

In the end, we must ask the question of why it was beneficial to commemorate the bridal transfer in various literary forms. For Maximilian I and his oeuvres, as has already been said, the answer is rather simple: the emperor's zeal to construct memory, *Gedechtnus*, for himself was well known, and it was epitomised in a sentence from the *Weißkunig*:

> A man who does not construct memory of himself while being alive, will have none after death, and he will be forgotten with the bell's toll.[76]

Nevertheless, it was not only meant to record the past but also to translate the heroic deeds of the ancestors in the present, and thus to bring legitimisation

FIGURE 7.4 Leonhard Beck, Theuerdank, scene 43, woodcut, 1517. Albertina, Vienna, invent. no. DG2012/128/43.

to the dynasty by extolling its roots.[77] By imitation of medieval Arthurian romances, taking place in the *Theuerdank* (and partially in the *Weißkunig*, but not in relation to the journey), Maximilian aimed to create the impression of an ideal knight chosen by God to defeat infidels, to reform the church, and to usher in long-lasting peace. His marriage to the heiress of Burgundy, a hub of chivalric traditions, must have strengthened this self-perception of his.[78] The place of the bridal journey is indisputable in the process—it not only provided material to frame artistic portrayal but also acted as a vehicle for the heroic acts, and it played a crucial role for dynastic memory, even to such an extent that the literary journey replaced the actual one: the passage of Eleanor of Portugal in the *Weißkunig* is dramatised whereas the voyage of Maximilian to Flanders, otherwise not very rich in memorable deeds, was transformed in the *Theuerdank* to symbolise the emperor's life-long quest for *Ehre* (honour) and *Gedachnus*.

There are more similarities between this approach and the epithalamia than one might think. The wedding poems and orations, too, took advantage of the brides' transfer and they did not understand it in terms of its physical dimension only. Naturally, there were elements of it that could have served as suitable material for encomiastic ends, such as very common pictures of travel toils or adverse weather. Analogously to the *Theuerdank*, however, they could have altered the overall image to match the *deductio* scheme, which results in the fact that many of these epithalamic compositions could well have worked for any dynastic wedding. In other words, if one did not know the title and addressees, one could find it difficult to determine the nuptials for which the particular epithalamium was composed. This is not to say that the poems and orations are monotonous or identical, on the contrary, each of them approaches the task with a slightly (or totally) different angle, while at the same time following the rules of the genre. But the way in which they shift the actual bride's transfer to the metaphorical one is as much detached from reality as Maximilian's chivalric quest, yet, at the same time, comparably important since it played a crucial role for the encomiastic goals of the authors. On the other hand, the close similarity in how Eleanor of Portugal's journey is presented in a seemingly factual report (Lanckman's travelogue) and a self-promoting-literary opus (the *Weißkunig*) opens the question of to what extent we may take the chronicles or travelogues to be a relatively reliable source for bridal journeys. The same applies for festival books or correspondence because, as we have seen in the case of Bianca Maria Sforza's letters above, even this form of evidence was steeped in rhetorical techniques. In the end, one may conclude that we can say virtually nothing about *how* the particular bridal journey happened but almost everything about *what* the contemporary rulers and writers wanted us to see. And it seems they wanted us to see glory, pageantry, and heroism.

Still, in determining the final purpose of these literary compositions, one must be cautious. Maximilian-sponsored and authored writings were surely a part of his commemorative programme, adding to the self-affirmative process of his princely house. History was a crucial tool in shaping the identity of a dynasty, which was always a group extending beyond kin relations: it was an imagined community with shared myths, traditions, and genealogies, that extended endlessly into the past as well as the future. That is why the past, present, and future of the princely house were closely connected, and history, for instance, served as a teaching material for dynastic youth or backed up their power aspirations.[79] Emperor Maximilian, I was one of the first rulers who recognised the possibilities of printing and purposely used writings and visual media to spread his propaganda throughout Europe, not limiting oneself to literature but also producing propagandistic leaflets, for instance, to incite the people against a government that he was fighting.[80] Yet speaking of the epithalamia, many scholars have treated them as a tool of propaganda too, but

this claim should be subject to further analysis as many other motivations could have been involved.[81]

We should treat them and other sources—definitely the festival books—as dynastic memorials. In this respect, an attachment to the second edition of Orzechowski's *Panagyricus*—which, per se, is not an epithalamic oration but rather a chronicle of the wedding, interspersed with some encomiastic elements—is interesting. In it, the author reacts to the criticism of some (probably prominent) people that he forgot to mention or diminished in the first edition of the text. Orzechowski defends himself, saying that it is not his job to extol them, but rather the king's nuptials. Did he mean that he intended to memorialise it for posterity, to spread the king's glory abroad, or to just curry the monarch's favour and gain a small profit for himself?

Be that as it may, Orzechowski's apologia is a rare testimony that the people involved in the royal wedding were anxious about their place in history. Also, it is one of the few reports about the reception of memorial works related to the bridal journeys in this period. The response, no matter how negative, that the first edition of Orzechowski's work received attests to the wider audience, probably consisting of aristocracy. Although many epithalamia were printed shortly after the nuptial festivities, we know very little about the number of copies or impact of these texts. Riccardo Bartolini, a humanist describing the First Vienna Congress (1515), bemoans the princes' lack of interest in panegyrics:

> Nowadays, the princes are not interested in digressions and a cultivated way [of speaking] but they wish the matter to be executed briefly, taking pleasure in clichés instead, even if the oration is full of their praise. If we follow the precepts of the ancient [orators] and the Ciceronian speech, the princes either do something else or sleep.[82]

Despite this unflattering characterisation, Orzechowski's defence as well as the amount of energy and resources which Maximilian I expended in creating his commemorative corpus of texts points to the very opposite: these works were crucial means for building the prestige and storing fame for posterity.

Notes

1 Pius II, *Historia austrialis*, 2:583; Pina, *Chronica de el-rei D. Affonso V*, 126.
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3 Lubkin, *A Renaissance Court*, 53.
4 Patricia E. Grieve, *The Eve of Spain. Myths of Origins in the History of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Conflict* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 125–128.
5 Tufte, *Poetry of Marriage*, 130–131.

6 D'Elia, *The Renaissance of Marriage*.
7 Matthew Tibble, *Nicolaus Mameranus: Poetry and Politics at the Court of Mary Tudor* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 51–72.
8 Christof Ginzel, *Poetry, Politics and Promises of Empire: Prophetic Rhetoric in the English and Neo-Latin Epithalamia on the Occasion of the Palatine Marriage in 1613* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2009), 213–266.
9 Marion Rutz, 'Panegyrics and Politics: Three Polish and One Prussian Epithalamium for the Wedding of Zygmunt I and Barbara Zápolya in 1512', *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie* 76, no. 2 (2020): 245–289.
10 Cueto, 'Historia y ficción poética', 72–74.
11 Patrik Pastrnak, 'Bona Sforza's Bridal Journey to Poland as Imaginary Traveling and Jagiellonian Propaganda', *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie* 76, no. 2 (2020): 289–315.
12 Petrus Roysius, 'De apparatu nuptiarum Sigismundi Augusti et Catharinae, caesaris Ferdinandi filiae', in Brożek and Niedźwiedź, *Szesnastowieczne epitalamia*, 376, henceforth as Roysius, 'De apparatu nuptiarum Catharinae'.
13 Roysius, 'De apparatu nuptiarum Catharinae', 378.
14 Ibid., 380.
15 Ibid., 382.
16 Petrus Roysius, 'De apparatu nuptiarum Sigismundi Secundi Augusti, Poloniae Regis, atque Reginae Elisabes, Ferdinandi, Romanorum Regis filiae', in Brożek and Niedźwiedź, *Szesnastowieczne epitalamia*, 252, henceforth as 'De apparatu nuptiarum Elisabes'.
17 Pastrnak, 'Bona Sforza's Bridal Journey to Poland as Imaginary Traveling', 297–302.
18 Roysius, 'De apparatu nuptiarum Elisabes', 244.
19 Cernota, *Apparatus nuptiarum*, [Cii v].
20 Cernota, [Cv r].
21 Roysius, 'De apparatu nuptiarum Elisabes', 244.
22 Roysius, 'De apparatu nuptiarum Catharinae', 250.
23 Ibid.
24 Clemens Ianicius, 'Epithalamion serenissimo regi Poloniae Sigismundo Augusto', in *Szesnastowieczne epitalamia łacińskie w Polsce*, ed. Mieczysław Brożek (Cracow: Księgarnia Akademicka, 1999), 224.
25 Cueto, 'Historia y ficción poética', 72.
26 Pastrnak, 'Bona Sforza's Bridal Journey', 301–302.
27 See the subchapter "Meeting the spouse".
28 Bargaeus, *Epithalamium in nuptias*, 9–10.
29 Ibid., 10.
30 Ibid., 18.
31 Roysius, 'De apparatu nuptiarum Elisabes', 252–254.
32 Ibid., 270.
33 Cernota, *Apparatus nuptiarum*, [Bii].
34 Giasone dal Maino, *Epithalamion zur Hochzeit Maximilians mit Bianca Maria Sforza*, ÖNB, Cod. Ser. n. 12594, fol. 10r.
35 Bianca Maria Sforza to Anna Sforza, Mals, 15 December 1493, ASMo, ASE, Carteggio con principi esteri 1583/9 (not foliated).
36 Bianca Maria Sforza to Anna Sforza, Imst, 19 December 1493, ASMo, ASE, Carteggio con principi esteri 1583/9 (not foliated).
37 See the subchapter "Lodgings".
38 Bianca Maria Sforza to Anna Sforza, Imst, 19 December 1493, ASMo, ASE, Carteggio con principi esteri 1583/9 (not foliated).
39 Giasone dal Maino, *Epithalamion*, ÖNB, Cod. Ser. n. 12594, fol. 10r.
40 Christina Antenhofer, 'Emotions in the Correspondence of Bianca Maria Sforza', in *Maximilian I. (1459–1519)*, ed. Heinz Noflatscher, Michael A. Chisholm, and Bertrand Schnerb (Innsbruck: Studien Verlag, 2011), 267–285.

41 Alwin Schultz, ed., *Der Weisskunig. Nach den Dictaten und eigenhändigen Aufzeichnungen Kaiser Maximilians I. zusammengestellt von Marx Treitzsaurwein von Ehren- Treitz*, Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses 6 (Vienna: Adolf Holzhausen, 1888), 6.
42 Ibid.
43 Koller, 'Die Verheiratung Eleonores von Portugal'.
44 Shayne Legassie, *The Medieval Invention of Travel* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2017), 7.
45 Akhimie, 'Gender and Travel Discourse', 128.
46 Ibid., 135.
47 Diana Pelaz Flores, 'El medio acuático en los viajes de las reinas a través de las crónicas de la baja edad media', in *El agua en el imaginario medieval. Los reinos Ibéricos en la baja edad media*, ed. Maria Isabel Del Val Valdivieso (Alacant: Universitat d'Alacant, 2016), 176.
48 "Cy gist Margot la gentil' damoiselle, qu'ha deux marys, et encor est pucelle." Jean Lemaire de Belges, *La couronne margaritique....* ((Lyon), 1549), 48.
49 de' Marchi, *Narratione particolare*, fol. 8v.
50 Ibid.
51 Giovanni Altoviti, *Essequie di Margerrita d'Austria, regina di Spagna etc. celebrate da Cosimo II., gran duca di Toscana* (Florence: Bartolommes Sermartelli, 1612), 29.
52 Juan Lopez de Hoyos, *Apparato real, y sumptuoso recebimiento, conque Madrid (como casa y morada de Su M.) recibio a la SS. r. d. Ana de Austria, n. s. con sus felicis. bodas y prospero Viage* (Madrid, 1572), 3.
53 Alixes de Cotereau, 'Voyage de la reine Anne en Espagne', in *Collection des voyages des souverains de Pays-Bas*, ed. Louis-Prosper Gachard and Charles Piot, vol. 3 (Brussels: F. Hayez, 1881), 576–577. The Spanish translation with a brief commentary in José García Mercadal, *Viajes de extranjeros por España y Portugal: desde los tiempos más remotos hasta comienzos del siglo XX*, vol. 2 (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 1999), 317–329.
54 de Cotereau, 'Voyage de la reine Anne', 575.
55 Lopez de Hoyos, *Apparato real*, 2–3.
56 de Cotereau, 'Voyage de la reine Anne', 574–575.
57 See the previous subchapter.
58 Louise Nyholm Kallestrup, 'Wrath and Fear. Lutheranism and the Marginalisation of Witches in Early Modern Denmark', in *Marginality, Media, and Mutations of Religious Authority in the History of Christianity*, ed. Laura Feldt and Jan Bremmer (Leuven: Peeters, 2019), 178–179.
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62 Ibid., v. 45–53.
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64 *Theuerdank* (1836), 80, chap. LV, v. 24–25, 28–30, 32–36.
65 Jan-Dirk Müller, *Gedechtnus. Literatur und Hofgesellschaft um Maximilian I.* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1982), 110.
66 Engels, 'Der Theuerdank als autobiographische Dichtung', 8–10.

67 Rabea Kohnen, 'Das mer gehoert zuo eim Ritter auserkorn – Überlegungen zum Theuerdank', in *Maximilians Ruhmeswerk. Künste und Wissenschaften im Umkreis Kaiser Maximilians I.*, ed. Jan-Dirk Müller and Hans-Joachim Ziegeler (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 287–288.
68 Howard Louthan, 'Theuerdank. Introduction to a Forgotten Classic of the Renaissance', in *Theuerdank* (2022), 16–23.
69 *Theuerdank* (1836), 17, chap. XII, v. 13–17; *Theuerdank* (2022), 58.
70 *Theuerdank* (1836), 18, chap. XIII, v. 2–9; *Theuerdank* (2022), 59.
71 *Theuerdank* (1836), 46, chap. XXXIII, v. 18–20; 24, chap. XVII, v. 11; *Theuerdank* (2022), 102, 67.
72 E.g. *Theuerdank* (1836), chap. XIII, XIV, XVI, XXXI, XLVIII.
73 *Theuerdank* (1836), 92, chap. LXV, v. 35–37; 104, chap. LXXII, v. 99; *Theuerdank* (2022), 169, 186.
74 *Theuerdank* (1836), 62, chap. XLIII, v. 83–85, 88–91; *Theuerdank* (2022), 124.
75 *Theuerdank* (1836), 12, chap. IX, v. 46–51; *Theuerdank* (2022), 51.
76 "...wer ime in seinem leben kain gedachtnus macht, der hat nach seinem tod kain gedächtnus und desselben menschen wird mit dem glockendon vergessen..." Schultz, *Der Weisskunig*, 66.
77 Müller, *Gedechtnus*, 80–82.
78 Gerhild S. Williams, 'The Arthurian Model in Emperor Maximilian's Autobiographic Writings Weisskunig and Theuerdank', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 11, no. 4 (1980): 3–22.
79 Geevers and Marini, 'Introduction', 11–12.
80 Füssel, *The Theuerdank of 1517. Emperor Maximilian and the Media of His Day*, 7–22.
81 See the thematical cluster of studies, looking into the sixteenth-century Polish epithalamia, in *Zeitschrift of Slavische Philologie* 76, no. 2 (2020); Jacqueline Glomski, *Patronage and Humanist Literature in the Age of the Jagiellons* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 117 onwards.
82 Riccardus Bartholinus, *Odeporicon*, ed. Eva Frimmová (Trnava: Filozofická fakulta TU, 2014), 74.

8

CONCLUSION

The impact which the bridal journeys had on medieval and early modern society was immense: hundreds of diplomats, envoys, aristocrats, city officials, low-status personnel, soldiers, artists, musicians, poets, and humanists were involved in preparing, executing, and commemorating them. Each nuptial transfer was a little earthquake that resonated across all layers of society, and, as we have seen, this tremor only grew bigger over time. Stretching far beyond the mere physical movements of the future royal spouse, the journeys snowballed into a myriad of other meanings that epitomised the very character of a society based on prestige, magnificence, honour, and glory. The story of nuptial travelling is fascinating and rich, yet it is not a story easy to tell because this type of travel is a perfect condensation of monarchical order, dynastic agenda, value system, and social networks in this period. It is dynasty in motion and prestige on wheels. In order to grasp the role of this event one has to re-evaluate many facets of the world that, in Huizinga's words, was half millennium younger than ours.

Drawing upon the previous studies which outlined the themes of this type of travel or treated the journeys separately, this work—using a wider sample of weddings— conducted a comparative analysis of several key aspects of wedding transfers, many of which necessarily overlapped. Following up on the topic of centrality of these journeys for dynastic and political representation, Chapter 2 showed this purpose stood behind the very means of transfer: preparation of logistics, planning the route, time, or accommodation. The powerful blend of dynastic and political interests, international and unrepeatable character, and long distance made these journeys a very special type of royal mobility. Paradoxically though, this often resulted in contradictory situations: on the one hand, there was a carefully planned route, carriages and ships, and lodgings that

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required a great mobilisation of financial means and social networks; on the other, high expectations and interests of the dynasties almost led to catastrophies as many brides were forced to make their way in the midst of winter (due to timetabling that overlapped with the Church calendar, etc.) or find shelter in inappropriate settings—a scenario that would never happen on a traditional royal tour.

The splendour and grandeur were articulated also by the human element. The painstakingly organised and discussed international entourage (Chapter 3) was supposed to visualise the princess and dynasties' rank to the whole world. But most importantly, magnificence is communicated via the process itself: the bridal journey is viewed first and foremost as a triumph and festival. The transfers are not natural flows but cycles of staged ceremonies. The book did not aspire to reconstruct the order of these festivities, but to show that these solemn occasions, gradually increasing in number and scope over time, were meant to prolong the magnificence connected with the princely wedding, to spread it spatially and to offer the third-party host a possibility to participate in it. The journeys were festivals, but not always—comparing the cases from 1450s with 1550s, there is a clear tendency towards festivisation. This trend can be explained by several factors. Among these causes, one has to count the emergence of ceremonial protocol and festival books, the atmosphere of sumptuous royal progresses, and arguably also the end of peripatetic kingship. The urge to strictly follow the (still-emerging) ceremonial protocol might have sacred roots too. As the wedding journey—unlike most other monarchical rites—was connected with a real threat to one's life, it is only natural that bridal travellers and their companions sought divine help in diverting potential danger. Not only the bridal travellers took part in the liturgical calendar but they actively solicited holy shrines and sites, either as part of introductory rituals (into a new environment) or for apotropaic purposes. However, as Chapter 4 shows, some civic ceremonies (or more precisely, their proper execution) might have also had this protective function.

The journeys, however, did not stop to perform the dynastic purpose with the last shot of honorary cannonade. The dust from the princess's horse settled, music stopped, dancers left the floor, firework-lit skies turn dark again but the journeys as the finest moments of dynastic history did not go quietly into the night. Dressed in classicised or heroic robes, brides and grooms keep travelling with ancient gods or are refashioned as champions of virtues, overcoming obstacles on the way. Epithalamia, the Renaissance wedding poems and orations, Maximilian I's chivalric poem and romanticised autobiography, as well as many festival books and other panegyric compositions transformed these travels as ultimate feats of triumph and odyssey. Putting these oeuvres side by side, Chapter 7 links them with each other, distinguishes these two themes, which are used separately or mixed together, and thus reveals their ulterior agenda of dynastic memorialisation.

The bridal transfer was however not only a royal journey or pilgrimage but also a marital transition. Drawing upon an anthropological concept of rites of passage and other studies, Chapter 5 examined the ways by which the bride was segregated and integrated. Discussing the farewell to the family and native land, as well as the first meeting of the newlyweds, who often saw each other for the first time just prior to the wedding, the section shows that both acts were only singular points in the gradual and phased process. For a future queen, they had extra meaning, as she needed not only to meet her spouse but also her new domain, represented by delegations of their new subjects or via gifts. The incorporation culminated with the gestures performed during the first meeting with the husband that were to highlight unity. Overall, these findings complicate the concepts of previous historians (Coester and Kosior), who have tended to present a more constant pattern of the process and instead offer a much more complicated picture with many variables. To quote one example, Coester's typology of the bridal journeys (summarised in Introduction) seems to be clearly untenable in light of the diverse ways and circumstances many brides and grooms travelled to their spouses. Moreover, it also questions the anthropological concepts and asks again the question, voiced some time ago by János Bak in his introduction to the volume about coronations, if historians are not too quick to accept concepts and methods from other disciplines, and if the findings from different cultures can be applied to medieval Europe.[1] This appears to be especially true for the bridal journeys which evade not only the schemes of rite of passage but also categorisations between public-sacred ceremony, festival-ritual, and festival-spectacle.

One of the most important aspects of the book is bringing into focus not only the big, dynastic agenda but also stories and motivations of the people from the system. This applies first to the main protagonists—princely bride and groom—who stand in the centre of the event yet their power and agency are always hidden or overlooked. Princesses and princes were not just pawns or passive statues, carried on display in these massive dynastic feasts but they had their own voice. It is demonstrated across various chapters, for example in choosing their travel companions (Chapter 3), modes and gestures of giving goodbye to their natal families or welcoming the new ones (Chapter 5), and most prominently, in preparation for their future roles. Chapters 4 and 6 show many ways of this getting-into-role process: correspondence, taking care of court, getting favour of the new family, language learning, intercession, building memory and social connections, visiting dynastic and birth-related holy shrines. Although sources and modern popular literature tend to reduce the princesses to a form of merchandise handed over at the borders, they proved to be active agents during the transfers, always in the middle of decision-making and sometimes altering the route out of their own bidding. Queen's power and influence definitely did not start with her coronation and post-nuptial life but was much in progress already during the journey to her husband.

The experience of the bridal travellers was not the same. One of the factors influencing this was their gender. There were many differences, some of them are predictable (the presence/absence of the ladies' court in the retinue) and some of them are surprising, such as the power and agency of the travellers. The emasculating accidents of the males (Maximilian I in need of her bride's funds in order to travel, Maximilian II sidelined during the episode in Marseille) points to the fact that procedures were far from being linear and uniform and other considerations (status, age, dynastic goals) entered the play. The gender-related patterns are primarily visible in the protocol of the first meetings. The gender of traveller predetermined the choice of setting, intramural one for the incoming male and extramural one for incoming female. The final and perhaps the most crucial gender-related finding is not related to the traveller's sex but to our overall focus. Often, when discussing particular stages of the princely marriage, attention is paid only to a bride. This work aimed to show that the issues such as emotional anxiety, changing of sartorial code, or mutual obligation to be a good spouse were not unique to women. Hence, the groom could have been also expected to dress in her wife's fashion or portrayed to have endured emotional shock during the first encounter. By the same token, it was not only men who were curious about their upcoming spouses but brides were also eager to learn about the physical qualities, manners, and likings of their future husbands. Curiosity was not reprehensible but lauded and sought-after. In light of Carafa's advice book, this knowledge would allow the queen to begin adapting to her spouse long before the first meeting.

But the princely couple is not the only human element considered in this book. No less important are other people drawn by the vortex of journeys. They could stand in the closest vicinity of the prince(sse)s as their courtiers or household members and organise the passage from the distance or in terrain. The most prominence is given to them in Chapter 3 which scrutinises the first option—the group surrounding the bridal traveller. This strange court could have had many forms but it had to be properly staffed, respecting the criteria of splendour, numbers, manners, age, allegiances, and favour. In addition to these principles, there were additional complications in the form of the objections of the other wedding party, who had a strong say in the composition, but also the courtiers themselves as they competed or refused to be a part of the travelling entourage. However, this was just one segment. There were many envoys and diplomats who secured the smooth transition of the royal consorts, prepared feasts, spectacles, and accommodation for them (Chapters 2 and 4), took part in seeing off or welcoming them (Chapter 5) and entered into dialogue with them via gift-giving or gratuities (Chapter 6). Looking at the various definitions of princely court, the bridal entourage certainly fits the conception of court as a place providing catering to princess, foreign relations, and personal or dynastic reputation. However, John Adamson and Jeroen Duindam's classifications can be viewed more broadly. The court and the whole bridal transfer alike were

a series of meeting points, constant changing of ad hoc assembled groups, and a matrix of relations. In their fluidity, intricacy, and defiance of strict limits, the wedding journeys are a perfect microcosm of the court society.

Lastly, this brings us to the very beginning—what were the bridal journeys? Naturally, to call them only the spousal transfer miss would other important aspects of this entangled universe. Definitely, we can call them court or dynasty in motion, which is the title of this book. But we can view them in spatial terms too, as Foucault's heterotopia, a very unique and different place. María Cristina Quintero characterises in this way a city during the princess's visit.[2] However, we can rightly apply it to the entire wedding transfer. Foucault spells out five criteria pertinent to the heterotopias: virtually every culture has such a place (a), and there is no reason why a monarchical or court culture should be an exemption. Heteropias are generally very malleable and their functions often change (b), they are able to converge many places at once (c) and are often linked to specific moments (d), and lastly, they are both penetrable and isolated (e).[3] From the point of dynasty, prince(ss), city, courtiers, and actors, wedding journeys were definitely such a place in between reality and utopia. Crossing geographical, political, cultural, and many other boundaries, they were vectors that pointed incessantly to the future. They were microcosm of monarchy, dynasty in motion, and place and time like no other.

Notes

1 János M. Bak, 'Coronation Studies—Past, Present, and Future', in *Coronations: Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual*, ed. János M. Bak (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 9–10.
2 Quintero, 'The Spaces of Female Sovereignty', 185.
3 Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', *Diacritics* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 24–27.

APPENDIX 1

MAPS

The present collection of maps covers the journeys used as a core sample of analysis, excluding four of them: for Mary of Hungary and Anne of Bohemia [1521] there is not enough data to map their journey; Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543] copied the routes of her namesake [1454] and sister Catherine [1553]; Barbara of Habsburg [1565] travelled together with her sister Joanna up to Mantua and then turned to nearby Ferrara.

The blue marks are documented places or stays, the red ones indicate solemn entries and the green ones denote the place of the first meetings of the newlyweds.

The full-colour maps, other maps as well as itineraries, data, and other supplementary material are accessible via https://royalweddingjourneys94.webnode.page/.

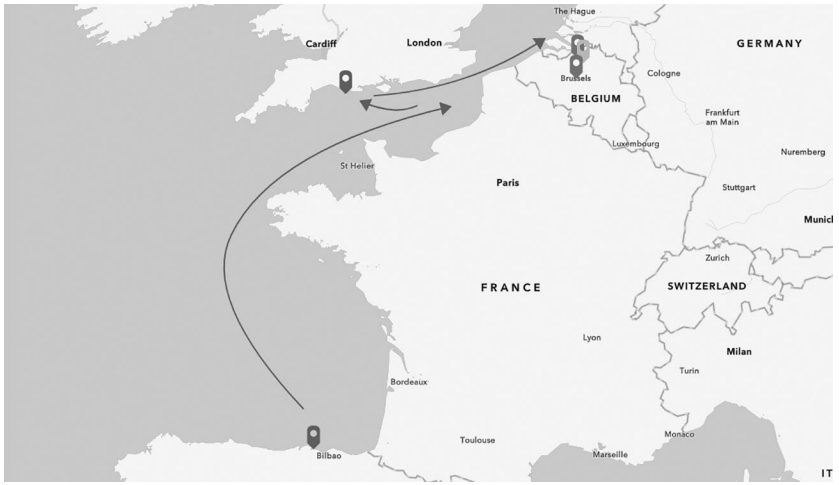
MAP 8.1 Eleanor of Scotland's journey (1448/1449).

MAP 8.2 Eleanor of Portugal's journey (1451/1452).

MAP 8.3 Elizabeth of Habsburg's journey (1454).

MAP 8.4 Maximilian I's journey (1477).

MAP 8.5 Bianca Maria Sforza's journey (1493).



MAP 8.6 Joanna of Castile's journey (1496).

MAP 8.7 Margaret of Habsburg's journey (1497).

MAP 8.8 Margaret of Habsburg's second journey (1501).

MAP 8.9 Maximilian II's journey (1548).

MAP 8.10 Catherine of Habsburg's journey (1549).

MAP 8.11 Catherine of Habsburg's second journey (1553).

MAP 8.12 Eleanor of Habsburg's journey (1561).

MAP 8.13 Joanna of Habsburg's journey (1565).

APPENDIX 2

GLOSSARY OF PRINCE(SSE)S AND JOURNEYS

Primarily discussed:

Anne of Bohemia and Hungary (of Jagiellon) (1503–1547)

parents: Vladislaus II, King of Bohemia and Hungary; Anne of Foix-Candale
husband: Ferdinand I, Holy Roman Emperor
journey:? (Innsbruck)—26 May 1521 (Linz)

Barbara of Habsburg (1539–1572)

parents: Ferdinand I, Holy Roman Emperor; Anne of Bohemia
husband: Alfonso II d'Este, Duke of Ferrara
journey: 14 November 1565 (Innsbruck)—5 December (Ferrara)

Bianca Maria Sforza (1472–1510)

parents: Galeazzo Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan; Bona of Savoy
husband: Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor (his second wife)
journey: 2 December 1493 (Milan)—23 December (Innsbruck)

Catherine of Habsburg (1533–1572)

parents: Ferdinand I, Holy Roman Emperor; Anne of Bohemia
1st husband: Francesco III Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua
1st journey 8 October 1549 (Innsbruck)—22 October (Mantua)

2nd husband: Sigismund II Augustus, king of Poland (his third wife)
2nd journey:? 1553 (Vienna)—30 July (Cracow)

Eleanor of Scotland (1433–1480)

parents: James I, King of Scotland, Joan Beaufort.
husband: Sigismund, Count of Tirol
journey: October 1448 (Tours)—12 February 1449 (Meran)

Eleanor of Portugal (1434–1467)

parents: Edward, King of Portugal; Eleanor of Aragon
husband: Frederick III, Holy Roman Emperor
journey: 12 November 1451 (Lisbon)—24 February 1452 (Pisa). Eleanor's journey was coordinated with Frederick's imperial ride to Rome, and the couple was supposed to meet in Tuscany and proceed together to the joint coronation from the pope's hands.

Eleanor of Habsburg (1534–1594)

parents: Ferdinand I, Holy Roman Emperor; Anne of Bohemia
husband: Guglielmo I, Duke of Mantua
journey: 14 April 1561 (Innsbruck)—26 April (Mantua)

Elizabeth of Habsburg (1436–1505)

parents: Albert II, King of the Romans, Bohemia, Hungary; Elizabeth of Luxembourg
husband: Casimir IV, King of Poland
journey:? 1454 (Vienna?)—10 February (Cracow)

Elizabeth of Habsburg (1526–1545)

parents: Ferdinand I; Anne of Bohemia
husband: Sigismund II Augustus, later King of Poland (his first wife)
journey: 21 April 1543 (Vienna)—5 May (Cracow)

Joanna (Juana) of Castile (1479–1555)

parents: Ferdinand II, King of Aragon; Isabella, Queen of Castile
husband: Philip the Fair, Duke of Burgundy
journey: 22 August 1496 (Laredo)—9 December (Brussels)

Joanna of Habsburg (1547–1578)

parents: Ferdinand I, Holy Roman Emperor; Anne of Bohemia
husband: Francesco I de' Medici, later Duke of Ferrara
journey: 14 November 1565 (Innsbruck)—16 December (Florence)

Margaret of Habsburg (1480–1530)

parents: Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor; Mary of Burgundy
1st husband: John (Juan), Prince of Asturias
1st journey: 21 January 1497 (Vlissingen)—6 March (Santander)
2nd husband: Philibert II, Duke of Savoy
2nd journey: 27 October 1501 (Brussels)—8 December (Geneva)

Mary of Hungary (1505–1558)

parents: Philip the Fair, Duke of Burgundy; Joanna of Castile
husband: Louis II, King of Bohemia and Hungary
journey: 1521 (Innsbruck) —? summer 1521 (Buda)

Maximilian I of Habsburg (later Holy Roman Emperor, 1459–1519)

parents: Frederick III, Holy Roman Emperor; Eleanor of Portugal
wife: Mary of Burgundy
journey: 21 May 1477 (Vienna)—18 August (Ghent)

Maximilian II of Habsburg (later Holy Roman Emperor, 1527–1576)

parents: Ferdinand I, Holy Roman Emperor; Anne of Bohemia
wife: Maria of Spain (1st grade cousin)
journey: 10 June 1548 (Augsburg)—13 September (Valladolid)

Others:

Anne of Austria (1601–1666)

parents: Philip III, King of Spain; Margaret of Habsburg
husband: Louis XIII, King of France
journey: 18 October 1615 (Burgos)—21 November (Bordeaux)

Anne of Bohemia (1366–1394)

parents: Charles IV, Holy Roman Emperor; Elizabeth of Pomerania
husband: Richard II, King of England
journey: September 1381 (Bohemia)—18 January 1382 (London)

Anne of Cleves (1515–1557)

parents: John III, Duke of Cleves; Maria of Jülich-Berg
husband: Henry VIII, King of England
journey: 26 November 1539 (Cleves)—3 January 1540 (Greenwich)

Anne of Denmark (1574–1619)

parents: Frederick II, King of Denmark; Sophie of Mecklenburg-Güstrow
husband: James VI, King of Scotland
journey: 5 September 1589 (Copenhagen) —17 May 1590 (Edinburgh)

Anne of Foix-Candale (1484–1506)

parents: Gaston of Foix, Count of Candale; Catherine of Navarre
husband: Vladislaus II, King of Bohemia and Hungary
journey: June 1502 (Blois)—29 September (Székesfehérvár)

Anne of Habsburg (1549–1580)

parents: Maximilian II, Holy Roman Emperor; Maria of Spain
husband: Philip II, King of Spain (his fourth wife)
journey: 1 August 1570 (Speyer)—12 November (Segovia)

Anne Marie d'Orléans (1669–1728)

parents: Philippe I, Duke of Orléans; Henrietta of England
husband: Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy
journey: 10 April 1684 (Versailles)—8 May (Turin)

Barbara Gonzaga (1455–1503)

parents: Ludovico III, Marquis of Mantua; Barbara of Brandenburg
husband: Eberhard V, Count of Württemberg-Urach
journey: 10 June 1474 (Mantua)—3 July (Urach)

Beatrice of Aragon (1457–1508)

parents: Ferdinand I, King of Naples; Isabella Chiaramonte
husband: Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary (his second wife)
journey: 18 September 1476 (Naples)—10 December (Székesfehérvár)

Bona of Savoy (1449–1503)

parents: Louis, Duke of Savoy; Anne of Lusignan
husband: Galeazzo Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan
journey: 17 May 1468 (Amboise)—7 July (Milan)

Bona Sforza (1494–1557)

parents: Gian Galeazzo Sforza, Duke of Milan; Isabella of Aragon
husband: Sigismund I Old, King of Poland (his second wife)
journey: 3 February 1518 (Manfredonia)—18 April (Cracow)

Catherine of Jagiellon (1526–1583)

parents: Sigismund I Old, King of Poland; Bona Sforza
husband: John III, later King of Sweden
journey: 4 October 1562 (Vilnius)—21 December (Turku)

Christine of Norway (1234–1262)

parents: Haakon IV, King of Norway; Margaret Skulesdatter
husband: Philip, Infante of Castile
journey: summer 1257 (Oslo)—January 1258 (Valladolid)

Eleanor of Aragon (1450–1493)

parents: Ferdinand I, King of Naples; Isabella Chiaramonte
husband: Ercole I d'Este, Duke of Ferrara
journey: 24 May 1473 (Naples)—3 July (Ferrara)

Elena Ivanovna of Moscow (1476–1513)

parents: Ivan III, Grand Prince of Moscow; Sophia Palaiologina
husband: Alexander Jagiellon, Grand Duke of Lithuania (later King of Poland)
journey: 15 January 1495 (Moscow)—15 February (Vilnius)

Elizabeth of France (1602–1644)

see **Isabella of Bourbon**

Elizabeth of Habsburg (1554–1592)

parents: Maximilian II, Holy Roman Emperor; Maria of Spain
husband: Charles IX, King of France
journey: 5 November 1570 (Speyer)—29 March 1571 (Paris)

Ercole II d'Este (later Duke of Ferrara, 1508–1559)

parents: Alfonso I d'Este, Lucrezia Borgia
wife: Renée of France
journey: 3 April 1528 (Ferrara)—20 May (Paris). Later the same year (September–November) Ercole and Renée travelled together to Ferrara.

Hedwig of Jagiellon (1457–1502)

parents: Casimir IV, King of Poland; Elisabeth of Habsburg
husband: George, Duke of Bavaria-Landshut
journey: 10 October 1475 (Poznań)—14 November (Landshut)

Isabella of Bourbon (or Elizabeth of France, 1602–1644)

parents: Henry IV, King of France; Mary of Medici
husband: Philip IV, King of Spain
journey: 17 August 1615 (Paris) – 22 November (Burgos)

Isabella of Portugal (1397–1471)

parents: John I, King of Portugal; Philippa of Lancaster
husband: Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy
journey: 13 October 1429 (Lisbon)—7 January 1430 (Sluis)

Joan of England (1333/4—1348)

parents: Edward III, King of England; Philippa of Hainault
husband: Peter of Castile
journey: 9 January 1348 (London)—2 September (died in Bordeaux)

Joan of France (1351–1371)

parents: Philip VI, King of France;
husband: John, later King of Aragon
journey: July/August 1371 (Paris)—16 September (died Béziers)

Margaret of Habsburg (1584–1611)

parents: Charles II, Archduke of Inner Austria; Maria of Bavaria
husband: Philip III, King of Spain
journey: 30 September 1598 (Graz)—20 April 1599 (Valencia)

Margaret of Parma (1522–1586)

parents: Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor; Johanna Maria van der Gheynst (illegitimate)
husband: Alessandro de' Medici, Duke of Florence (later married Ottavio Farnese, Duke of Parma)
journey: 7 January 1533 (Brussels)—May (Naples) (The actual wedding took place several years later)

Margaret of York (1446–1503)

parents: Richard III, King of England; Cecil Nevill
husband: Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy (his third wife)
journey: 18 June 1468 (London)—25 June (Sluis)

Marie Antoinette (1755–1793)

parents: Francis I, Holy Roman Emperor; Maria Theresa
husband: Louis XVI, later King of France
journey: 21 April 1770 (Vienna)—16 May (Versailles)

Maria of Guimarães (1538–1577)

parents: Duarte, Infante of Portugal; Isabel of Braganza
husband: Alexander (Alessandro) Farnese, later Duke of Parma and Piacenza
journey: 14 September 1565 (Lisbon)—30 November (Brussels)

Maria Magdalena of Austria (1587–1631)

parents: Charles II, Archduke of Inner Austria; Maria of Bavaria
husband: Cosimo II, later Grand Duke of Tuscany
journey: 22 September 1608 (Graz) —18 October (Florence)

Maria Theresa of Spain (1638–1683)

parents: Philip IV, King of Spain; Elizabeth of France
husband: Louis XIV, King of France
journey: 3 June 1660 (Fontarrabie)—26 August (Paris)

Philip II (later King of Spain, 1527–1598)

parents: Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor; Isabel of Portugal
wife: Mary I, Queen of England
journey: 14 May 1554 (Valladolid)—25 July (Winchester)

Rigund (ca 569–ca 589)

parents: Chilperic I, King of Neustria; Fredegund
husband (intended): Recared, son of King of Visigoths
journey: September 584 (Paris)—October 584? (Toulouse)

Sophie of Jagiellon (1522–1575)

parents: Sigismund I Old, King of Poland; Bona Sforza
husband: Henry the Younger, Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg
journey: 28 January 1556 (Warsaw)—22 February (Wolfenbüttel)

Theodelinda (before 588–627)

parents: Garibald I, Duke of Bavaria; Walderata
husband: Authari, King of Lombards
journey:? 588 (Bavaria) —? (Lombardy)

Yolande of Lorraine (d. 1500)

parents: Frederick II, Count of Vaudémont; Yolande, Duchess of Lorraine and Bar
husband: William II, Landgrave of Hesse
journey: 17 October 1497 (Pont-à-Mousson)—5 November (Kassel)

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